VIRTUES-BASED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A conceptual analysis and evaluation of *The Virtues Project*

UNIVERSITY *of* TASMANIA

Toby P. Newstead
BAPC, Royal Roads University, BC, Canada

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Tasmanian School of Business and Economics
University of Tasmania
March 2019

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by any other person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

Date: 17 July 2018

Signed:

Toby P. Newstead

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

The research associated with this thesis complies with the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University. The research was approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee in October 2016 (**H0015780**).

STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY OF ACCESS

This thesis can be made available for loan. Copying of any part of this thesis is prohibited for two years from the date this statement was signed; after that time limited copying is permitted in accordance with the *Copyright Act 1968.*

Signed: Date: 17 July 2018

Toby P. Newstead

STATEMENT REGARDING PUBLISHED WORK CONTAINED IN THIS THESIS

The publishers of the articles comprising Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, hold the copyright for that content, and access to the material should be sought from the respective journals or publishers. The remaining non-published content of the thesis may be made available for loan and limited copying and communication in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

Signed: Date: 17 July 2018

Toby P. Newstead

STATEMENT OF CO-AUTHORSHIP

The following people and institutions contributed to the publication of work undertaken as part of this thesis:

Candidate: **Toby P Newstead (TN)** Tasmanian School of Business and Economics, University of Tasmania

Supervisor: **Dr Sarah Dawkins (SD)**, Tasmanian School of Business and Economics, University of Tasmania

Supervisor: **Dr Rob Macklin (RM)**, Tasmanian School of Business and Economics, University of Tasmania

Supervisor: **Adjunct Professor Angela Martin (AM)**, Tasmanian School of Business and Economics, University of Tasmania

AUTHOR DETAILS AND ROLES[1]

1. The article reported in Chapter 3:

Newstead, T., Macklin, R., Dawkins, S., & Martin, A. (2018). What is virtue? Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 32*(4), 443-457. doi: 10.5465/amp.2016.0162

TN conceptualized the article, designed and conducted the scoping review and wrote the manuscript (70%).

RM assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts, and helped with the development of resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

SD assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts, and helped with the development of resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

AM assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and provided feedback on drafts, resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

2. The article reported in Chapter 4:

Newstead, T., Dawkins, S., Macklin, R., & Martin, A. 'Good' leadership: A case for virtue-based leadership development. Proposal accepted for presentation at the 27th Kravis-de Roulet Leadership Development Conference, (Los Angeles, California) and manuscript invited for submission to *The Leadership Quarterly* Special Issue on Leader(ship) Development.

[1] A statement of co-authorship outlining each author's proportionate contribution to these articles is kept in the School.

TN conceptualized the article, designed and conducted the scoping review and wrote the manuscript (70%).

SD assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts, and helped with the development of resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

RM assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts, and helped with the development of resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

AM reviewed and provided feedback on the final version of the manuscript (10%).

3. **The article reported in Chapter 5:**

Newstead, T., Dawkins, S., Macklin, R., & Martin, A. The Virtues Project: An approach to developing 'good' leaders. Revised and resubmitted to *The Journal of Business Ethics*.

TN conceptualized the article, designed and conducted the narrative review and wrote the manuscript (70%).

SD assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts, and helped with the development of resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

RM assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts, and helped with the development of resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

AM assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts, and helped with the development of resubmission letters and revisions (10%).

4. **The article reported in Chapter 6**

Newstead, T., Dawkins, S., Macklin, R., & Martin, A. Evaluating The Virtues Project as a leadership development program. Under review with the *Australian Journal of Management*.

TN conceptualized the article, designed the study, collected the data, managed and analysed the data, and wrote the manuscript (70%).

SD assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts (10%).

RM assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and edited multiple drafts (10%).

AM assisted in conceptualizing the paper, reviewed and provided feedback on the final version of the manuscript (10%).

We the undersigned agree with the above stated "proportion of work undertaken" for each of the above published (or submitted) peer-reviewed manuscripts contributing to this thesis:

Signed: Date: 17 July 2018

Toby P. Newstead (TN) – Candidate

Signed: Date: 17 July 2018

Dr. Sarah Dawkins (SD) – Primary Supervisor

Signed: Date: 17 July 2018

Dr. Rob Macklin (RM) – Supervisor

Signed: Date: 17 July 2018

Adjunct Prof. Angela Martin (AM) –

Supervisor

Supervisor and Head of School Declaration

We the undersigned agree with the above stated proportion of work for each published or submitted journal article included in this thesis:

Signed: Date: 17 July 2018

Dr Sarah Dawkins

Primary Supervisor

Tasmanian School of Business and Economics

University of Tasmania

Signed: Date: 12 July 2018

Prof. Melanie Bryant

Head of School

Tasmanian School of Business and Economics

University of Tasmania

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My PhD has been shaped by many individuals. First and foremost, I am inexpressibly grateful to my parents. Mom and Dad, you are unwavering in your love, acceptance, and encouragement. Mom, your perceptiveness, dedication, and love are my rudder in life. And, Dad, your humor, humility, and love are my anchor.

To my husband, James, I am humbled by your integrity, patience, and devotion to me and our family. To my children, Jade and Casey, you two are my inspiration to do ever better. Jade, your thoughtfulness, generosity, resilience, and determination make this world a better place. And, Casey, your joyfulness, wonder, empathy, and enthusiasm fill the hearts of those around you, especially mine. To my sister, Adria, I am in awe of your strength, and I thank you for holding my heart with such gentleness and understanding.

Thank you to my Ellis family, for providing my life with a backdrop of intellect, loyalty, wit, and loving sarcasm. Thank you to my Lasqueti family, for continuing to inspire me to live more determinedly, creatively, and interdependently. And thank you to my Newstead family, for your warm acceptance, cheerfulness, and deep love.

My gratitude to Sara Redman for her enthusiasm and openness; and to Tony Chapman for his humility and generosity. You two were some of my earliest champions on this journey and you continue to support and inspire me.

Sincere thanks to the nine leaders who participated in my study. I acknowledge your openness, generosity of time, and commitment to your own development. To the founders of *The Virtues Project,* for your devotion and humanity. And, to Dara Feldman, for your service and infectious enthusiasm.

And finally, to my supervisors. Without you, none of this would have happened. Angela, thank you for taking me on in the first place. I admire your discernment, courage, and integrity. Rob, thank you for your gentleness, consideration, wisdom, and grace with

which you have provided me invaluable support and guidance. And Sarah, thank you for your diligence, dignity, and genuine kindness. I am inspired by your excellence. I am eternally grateful to the three of you for the time, energy, expertise, and care you have invested in me and my PhD.

It has been a privilege to embark on this journey. The success of completion is one I share with all those mentioned above, and a raft of others who have supported me along the way. I cannot wait to see what comes next...

ABSTRACT

There is no doubt that leadership within the organizational context is important. A booming leadership development industry and an exponentially expanding leadership literature attest to this. However, ethical and corporate scandals continue to make headlines, and many can relate to the experience of working for uninspiring or even abusive leaders. This suggests we scholars have further work to do in our efforts to improve the practice of leadership. Of particular interest is how we might enable the development of *good* leaders.

My thesis aims to advance this interest by conceptually and empirically evaluating a grassroots initiative called *The Virtues Project* for its acceptability and efficacy as a leadership development program.

I was working as a leadership development practitioner when I discovered *The Virtues Project* (TVP) and saw its potential to develop leaders who would do good by themselves, their followers, organizations, and communities. But, I could find no theoretical or empirical evidence to support it. Such a dearth piqued my interest and offered an opportunity to advance scholarly understanding of if and how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* leaders.

In my review of the leadership development and positive organizational inquiry literature (POI), I came across frequent reference to virtue, virtuo*usness*, and specific virtu*es*, such as humility, integrity, responsibility, justice, and compassion, but no robust conceptualization of exactly what virtue is; nor how virtue informs *good* leadership; nor any clear direction on virtues-based leadership development. These gaps impelled the three conceptual journal articles that compose Chapters 3-5 of my thesis.

The first journal article is written as a scoping review and appears in Chapter 3. It draws on the ontology of critical realism to advance the conceptualization of virtue and inform positive organizational inquiry. The second journal article is also written as a scoping

review and appears in Chapter 4. It builds on my reconceptualization of virtue, explores the nexus of leadership and virtue at multiple levels, and justifies a virtues-based approach, such as TVP, to developing *good* leaders. The third journal article is written as a narrative review and appears in Chapter 5. It addresses the need to theorize TVP by underpinning it with extant theory and evidence from the fields of virtue ethics, moral foundation theory, and leadership development to better understand why and how it may be expected to achieve outcomes as a leadership development program.

Building on my conceptual analyses (Chapter 3-5), I conducted the first known empirical study to explore if and how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* leaders (reported in Chapter 6). An evaluation approach grounded in critical realism guided my longitudinal comparative case study method, which consisted of qualitative interview data collected from nine participating leaders and their colleagues. Analysis revealed leaders experienced TVP as a trigger-event, which resulted in new understandings of what virtues are and how they can draw on and incorporate virtues into their efforts to *be* and *do* good, and to lead well.

In sum, my thesis advances TVP as a conceptually robust, empirically evaluated approach to developing *good* leaders. In doing so, it makes significant contributions to the fields of POI, virtue ethics, and leadership development. My thesis also contributes to the practice of leadership by advancing TVP as a readily accessible, practical, and evaluated means of developing *good* leaders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVE	Aristotelian Virtue Ethics
CMO	Context – Mechanism – Outcome configuration
CR	Critical realism
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FT50	*Financial Times* 50 top ranked journals
MFT	Moral Foundations Theory
MRT	Mid-Range Theory
OB	Organizational Behavior
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
OD	Organizational Development
OR	Other-rater
POB	Positive Organizational Behavior
POI	Positive Organizational Inquiry
POP	Positive Organizational Psychology
POS	Positive Organizational Scholarship
RQ	Research Question
TVP	The Virtues Project
T1	Time 1 (data collection)
T2	Time 2 (data collection)
T3	Time 3 (data collection)
VE	Virtue Ethics

LIST OF APPENDICES

PUBLICATIONS

Publications directly arising from the work undertaken in this thesis:[2]

Chapter 3:

Newstead, T., Macklin, R., Dawkins, S., & Martin, A. (2018). What is virtue? Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 32*(4), 443-457. doi: 10.5465/amp.2016.0162

Articles submitted to peer-reviewed journals:

Chapter 4:

Newstead, T., Dawkins, S., Macklin, R., & Martin, A. 'Good' leadership: A case for virtue-based leadership development. Proposal accepted for presentation at the 27th Kravis-de Roulet Leadership Conference (Los Angeles, California) and manuscript invited for submission to *The Leadership Quarterly* Special Issue on Leader(ship) Development.

Chapter 5:

Newstead, T., Dawkins, S., Macklin, R., & Martin, A. *The Virtues Project*: An approach to developing 'good' leaders. Revised and re-submitted to *The Journal of Business Ethics*.

Chapter 6:

Newstead, T., Dawkins, S., Macklin, R., & Martin, A. Evaluating *The Virtues Project* as a leadership development program. Under review with the *Australian Journal of Management*.

[2] Because Chapters 3-6 have been prepared as journal articles, some stylistic nuances may be noted. Elements of repetition may also be noticed as the articles unfold and build upon each other.

CHAPTER

ONE

Introduction.

Chapter 1 is written as a conventional chapter.

PREFACE

In this chapter, I introduce my thesis, explain the rationale for my studies, describe the context within which my research is positioned, and highlight the contributions I make through this body of work. But, before I do so, I must explain the structure and nature of my thesis. Four of the seven chapters that compose my thesis have been prepared as journal articles; one has been published in *The Academy of Management Perspectives*, the other three are currently in the review process. This structure is in keeping with the University of Tasmania Guidelines for Incorporating Publications into a Thesis. Table 1.1 below distinguishes chapters written as journal articles from those written as conventional thesis chapters.

The variation between journal article and conventional chapter presentation necessitates variations in language, tone, and voice. I write conventional chapters in the first person singular, and the tone and language are influenced by the reflexive nature of my work. The voice in chapters written as journal articles is first person plural because they are co-authored, and the tone and language are dictated by the style of the journals to which they have been submitted[3]. I must also note the issue of repetition. In particular, between Chapter 2 (Methods) and Chapter 6 which is written as an empirical journal article. In both Chapters 2 and 6, I discuss my empirical methods. To reduce repetition, my discussion of empirical methods in Chapter 2 is focused on the rational for my methods, or *why* I did what I did; while in Chapter 6 my discussion of empirical methods is focused on a description of *what* I did.

[3] My native English is that of Canada and my university is based in Australia. I have adopted American English spelling throughout my thesis, however, for the sake of consistency with articles published in American journals.

Table 1.1

Thesis structure – chapters and articles

Chapter #	Chapter title	Style of chapter
Chapter 1	Introduction	Conventional chapter
Chapter 2	Methods	Conventional chapter
Chapter 3	What is virtue? Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry	Published journal article
Chapter 4	'Good' leadership: A case for virtues-based leadership development	Journal article under review
Chapter 5	*The Virtues Project:* An approach to developing 'good' leaders	Journal article under review
Chapter 6	Evaluating *The Virtues Project* as a leadership development program	Journal article under review
Chapter 7	Discussion and Conclusions	Conventional chapter

Each chapter of my thesis includes its own reference list. This is in keeping with the style of the published and submitted journal articles (Chapters 3-6) and keeps relevant references in proximity to the work that draws on them. To ease the transitions between conventional chapters and chapters written as journal articles, I include prefaces and postscripts for each chapter. In my prefaces and postscripts, I summarize the previous chapter, link it to the next, and provide a brief prelude. As stand-alone journal articles, Chapters 3-6 unfold and build upon one another. This means there is some repetition throughout; however, I use my prefaces and postscripts to explain this. My intent is to make my thesis as seamless and easy to follow as possible.

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I investigate how a program called '*The Virtues Project'* (TVP) might facilitate the development of *good* leaders. The need for good leaders – leaders who are self-aware, well-intentioned, authentic, and ethical is evidenced by media coverage of corporate scandal, greed, and psychopathy; as well as historical accounts of genocide, atrocity, and apathy. Moreover, there are numerous accounts, in both academic and practice literatures of people working for uninspiring, disheartening, unethical, or even abusive leaders. While individual leaders are not solely responsible for all the world's ills, the influence of leaders magnifies their morality (Ciulla, 2014), and shoulders them with an added responsibility to *be* and *do good*. The focus of my thesis is *good* leadership; how we might understand it as scholars, and how we might develop it in practice.

As a leadership development practitioner, I have witnessed first-hand that real leadership development happens when leaders develop as *people*. Leaders are people first, and it is when the individual leader grows as a person that the quality of his or her leadership practices improves. Developing *good* leaders starts with developing good people (Ciulla, 2014; Ciulla, 2017; Solomon, 1993). And developing good people is a matter of virtue (Annas, 2012; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). Pursuing my certification as a facilitator of TVP provided me with firsthand experience of the potential of virtues to unlock the goodness in people. I am driven by the hope that by advancing understanding of how we might develop *good* leaders, (e.g. leaders who are self-aware, authentic, and ethical), I might affect positive change for leaders, the people they lead, and their organizations and communities.

It is important to emphasise that this thesis does not report on a clinical double-blinded randomized control trial or experiment. I am deeply invested in both the conceptual and empirical work of this thesis, as it speaks directly to my practice as a leadership development practitioner and TVP facilitator. In line with this, I ground my approach in the

research philosophy of critical realism, which emphasises reflexivity and seeks to identify that which is causally efficacious as a means of moving beyond individual subjectivity (Fleetwood, 2005). By practicing reflexivity and drawing on the research philosophy of critical realism, I engage in careful conceptual and empirical analysis of how TVP might enable the development of *good* leaders.

There is another bias I must acknowledge: I believe in the inherent goodness of people. There are robust philosophies of selfishness and vice. And, I do not suggest that all people are good *all the time*. But, I believe that we are all born with virtues in potential and have an inherent inclination towards goodness, even if this inclination is sometimes diminished or derailed. I consciously choose, deeply believe in, and actively look for the best in and of people and this may influence my thesis.

THE VIRTUES PROJECT

My first encounter with TVP was in high school in Canada in the late 1990s. At the time I did not know it as TVP, but rather as our school's *Recognition of Excellence Program*. The *Program* consisted of yellow 'Recognition Slips' with a list of 100 virtues on one side, and on the other the space to write someone's name, the virtues you recognized in them, and when or how you had noticed. Once completed, the yellow Recognition Slips were folded and pinned to a board in the school cafeteria. As you came through the lunch line, you would scan the board and retrieve any slips with your name. There was something deeply meaningful about being recognized for the virtues others saw in me. And there was something equally as meaningful in learning how to recognize virtues in others. Giving and receiving recognition based on virtues taught us a lexicon and strategy for recognizing the good in ourselves and others.

Years later, working as a leadership development practitioner in Australia, I traced the *Recognition of Excellence Program* from my high school back to TVP. Soon after I pursued my facilitator training in TVP and began experimenting with using aspects of TVP in my development work with organizational leaders. Leaders responded well. However, I was keenly aware of the lack of theoretical or empirical evidence behind TVP, and of my own elementary understanding of virtues and virtues development; hence my pursuit of greater understanding through the work that comprises this thesis.

TVP was founded in Canada in the 1990s by Linda Kalevin-Popov, her husband, Dr. Dan Popov, and her brother, John Kalevin. They founded TVP in response to the meaninglessness and lack of purpose they perceived among children and youth, and they identified virtues as the most potent way to inspire meaning and purpose. TVP is grounded in the assumption that all people possess a character composed of virtues, and it proffers five language-based strategies to develop virtues in oneself and others. The five strategies of TVP are:

1. Speak the Language of Virtues
2. Recognize Teachable Moments
3. Set Clear Boundaries
4. Honor Spirit
5. Offer Companioning

TVP has become a global grassroots movement run by volunteers and used in schools and community groups across more than 100 countries. To substantiate my claims about and knowledge of TVP, I refer to its website (www.virtuesproject.com) as well as to its *Educators*' *Guide* (Popov & Smith, 2005).

SCHOLARLY CONTEXT

In order to understand if or how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* leaders, I turned to the literatures of positive organizational inquiry, virtue ethics, and leadership and leadership development. In the following sections, I explain how my readings of this literature provoked the research questions I aim to answer in this thesis.

Understanding Virtue

In recent decades, the field of positive psychology has expanded rapidly (e.g. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). The expansion occurred largely in response to previous decades of work focused on human deficits and psychopathy and has spawned off-shoots of positive inquiry in the organizational context. The broad umbrella of positive organization inquiry (POI), includes the discrete paradigms of positive organizational behavior (e.g. Dawkins, Martin, Scott, & Sanderson, 2013; Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Church, 2002), positive organizational scholarship (e.g. Bernstein, Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Cameron, Quinn, & Dutton, 2003), and positive approaches to leadership (e.g. Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cameron, 2011). POI paradigms are united in their efforts to understand and enable optimal human and organizational functioning, and focus on discrete concepts such as positive emotion (Fredrickson, 2001; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002), flourishing (Bakker & Schaufelf, 2008; Burke, Page, & Cooper, 2015), happiness (Gavin & Mason, 2004; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005), thriving (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012; Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, & Grant, 2005), psychological capital (Dawkins et al., 2013; Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007), and performance (Cameron, 2003; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Within POI literature, there is frequent reference to the notions of virtue, virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and organizational virtuo*usness*; but, rarely are these terms clearly defined or distinction made between them.

Meaningful communication between scholars and the construction of good theory depends on clear concepts (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Suddaby, 2010). In my review of the POI literature, I found frequent reference to virtue, specific virtu*es*, and the concepts of virtu*ous* and virtu*ousness*, but a lack of any agreed upon concept clarity. I came across many loose definitions of virtue and instances where an understanding of virtue was seemingly assumed, and no definition provided. I also came across numerous conflicting lists of what 'the' virtues are (e.g. Hackett & Wang, 2012; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Wärnå-Furu, Sääksjärvi,& Santavirta, 2010). Additionally, the inherency versus instrumentality of virtue was frequently blurred, with some advocating a virtues approach for the sake of virtue itself (e.g. Bright, Winn, & Kanov, 2014; Dahlsgaard, Peterson, & Seligman, 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), and others for the instrumental outcomes virtues might enable, such as business growth (Dokes, 2017) or performance (Donada, Mothe, Nogatchewsky, & de Campos Ribeiro, 2017). These discrepancies, seeming contradictions, and a general lack of concept clarity prompted the first of my research questions:

RQ 1a: What is virtue?

Chapter 3 undertakes a scoping review to answer this question by drawing on the philosophy of Aristotelian virtue ethics (AVE) and a critical realist ontological framework to illustrate a deep ontology of virtue. Doing so enables me to articulate a reconceptualization of virtue to inform POI. Descending from research question 1a, are three related questions I aim to address in Chapter 3. They are:

RQ 1b: What is the relationship between virtue, virtues, virtuous, and virtuousness?

RQ 1c: How does virtue differ from other similar concepts?

RQ 1d: How do we know what is virtuous in which contexts?

‘Good’ Leadership

Similar to POI, the field of leadership scholarship has expanded rapidly in recent decades. A review in 2014 identified over 60 discrete theories of leadership (Dinh et al., 2014). This attests to the proliferation of theory that has begun to attract critical attention from leading scholars in the field who warn against too much theory and not enough rigorous empirical investigation nor practical application (e.g. Antonakis, 2017; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014; Kellerman, 2012). The leadership development industry is booming too. In 2014, Forbes online published an article claiming that companies in the United States were investing $14 billion annually on leadership development (Hedges, 2014). This highlights the fact that many organizations care about effective leadership. However, a chasm exists between scholarly theories of leadership, investment in the leadership development industry, and the actual effective practice of organizational leaders. This is evidenced by frequent instances of corporate scandal, greed, unethical behavior, and apathy manifest in issues such as Volkswagen’s “Dieselgate”, BHP’s Gulf of Mexico oil spill, and the recent Australian parliamentarians’ citizenship scandal.

This chasm between leadership theory and investment in leadership development, and the actual practice of organizational leadership prompted the following research questions.

RQ 2a: What is *good* leadership?

RQ 2b: How can scholars help practicing leaders to *be* and *do good*?

Chapter 4 undertakes a scoping review to address these questions. I do so by building on my reconceptualization of virtue (Chapter 3) and a critical realist ontological framework to illustrate a deep ontology of *good* leadership, with virtue as the locus. In Chapter 4, I introduce TVP and explore the implicit assumptions which compose its program theory to advance it as a means by which scholars might help practicing leaders to *be* and *do* good.

Developing 'Good' Leaders

In leaders, both morality and immorality are magnified (Ciulla, 2004). This underscores the importance of understanding how we might develop leaders who *are* good and who *do* good. The emergence of ethical leadership theories (e.g. Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Eisenbeiss, 2012), and theories that include an ethical or moral dimension (e.g. Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Riggio, Zhu, Reina, & Maroosis, 2010) further attest to the importance of considering the ethics of leading. Of particular interest is work emerging at the intersection of organizational leadership and moral foundation theory (MFT). This work recognizes a plurality of moral foundations broader than the justice/care foundations traditionally recognized within ethical leadership theory (Fehr, Kai Chi, & Dang, 2015; Graham, Haidt, Koleva, Motyl, Iyer, Wojcik, & Ditto, 2013). By recognizing a broader array of moral foundations, including care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, sanctity/degradation, authority/subversion, and liberty/oppression the emerging theory of moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015) is well placed to accommodate the diversity and complexity of modern organizational leadership.

Virtue ethics articulates individual moral development as intrinsically intertwined with the common good (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962), and is therefore well suited to inform leadership that entails an intricate relationship between individual and collective processes (Conger, 1998, 2004). As is argued in Chapter 4 of this thesis, a virtues-based approach is well positioned to enable the development of *good* leadership. Chapter 5 builds on this premise by advancing TVP as a means of doing so.

The imperative to understand how TVP might develop *good* leaders is compounded by a comment made by renowned virtue ethicist, Julia Annas (2012). Annas explains that despite its aspirational focus on 'the good life' or *eudemonic* happiness (Aristotle,

350BCE/1962; Arjoon, 2000; Audi, 2012), virtue ethics has been critiqued for failing to provide any clear directions on how to live well. In addressing this critique, Annas (2012) names TVP as providing clear direction on how to translate the possibility of virtue into practice; but, Annas (2012, p. 678) warns that in its current state, TVP is "strikingly undertheorized".

Chapter 5 provides a narrative review of virtue ethics, MFT and moralized leadership, and the socio-psychological fields pertaining to organizational leadership to align the strategies of TVP to extant theory and advance understanding of how it might facilitate the development of *good* leaders. It does so by asking:

RQ 3a: How does TVP align to extant theory and evidence?

RQ 3b: What outcomes might we expect leaders to achieve from TVP training?

Having reconceptualized virtue (Chapter 3), justified a virtues-based approach to leadership development (Chapter 4), and theorized TVP (Chapter 5), in Chapter 6, I turn my attention to an empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program.

Evaluating TVP

The unbridled generation of leadership theory has been diagnosed as *theorea;* a disease whereby we produce excessive theory without convincing empirical evidence or any tangible impact on leadership practice (Antonakis, 2017). Compounding this condition is the chasm between leadership theory and practice, as discussed above. Critical to spanning this chasm is asking the right questions, namely what is *good* leadership and how can we scholars enable the development of *good* leaders (addressed in Chapter 4). Building on this, in Chapter 6, I report on my field study which represents the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program.

My evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program draws on my reconceptualization of virtue in Chapter 3 and builds on the premise that virtue is the locus of

good leadership, as discussed in Chapter 4. The evaluation also extends the arguments articulated in Chapter 4 and 5 that a virtues-based approach is best suited to developing *good* leaders. Given the exploratory nature of my study and the complex, relational, and emergent properties of leadership, my evaluation employs a longitudinal comparative case study design, grounded in a critical realist evaluation approach. My empirical study investigates three related research questions:

> **RQ 4a:** How can critical realist evaluation inform the study of leadership development?
>
> **RQ 4b:** How do leaders experience TVP?
>
> **RQ 4c:** What outcomes do leaders achieve as a result of TVP training?

Summary of Scholarly Context:

A desire to understand if or how TVP might enable the development of *good* leadership inspired this research. However, substantial conceptual analysis was required prior to any empirical evaluation of TVP. Although teeming with frequent reference to virtue, the POI literature lacked clear conceptualizations of it. This prompted my efforts to reconceptualize virtue, distinguish it from other similar concepts, and construct a framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts (research questions 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d, addressed in Chapter 3). Similarly, while bourgeoning with theory, the focus of leadership scholarship requires refocusing on the normative issue of *good* leadership, and how we scholars might enable it, which I aim to do by exploring research questions 2a and 2b in Chapter 4. While virtue ethics is well aligned to leadership, and TVP had been highlighted by Annas (2012) as a means of applying virtue ethics in practice, the program lacks theorizing, which I attempt to redress by investigating research questions 3a and 3b in Chapter 5. Taken together, this conceptual analysis provides an essential backdrop to my empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program, which is reported in Chapter 6.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY AND PRACTICE

By investigating each of my research questions, my thesis makes several important contributions to both theory and practice. In particular, theoretical contributions are expected to the fields of POI, leadership development scholarship, and virtue ethics. The contributions I make to theory flow out of the gaps I identified in the literature, as summarized above. I also articulate practical contributions to leadership development practitioners and practicing leaders. In the following section, I will explain how addressing each of my research questions resulted in theoretical contributions to POI, leadership development, and virtue ethics.

Theoretical Contributions

This section unfolds in order of my substantive research questions and highlights the theoretical contributions I make by addressing each.

RQ 1a: What is virtue?

RQ 1b: What is the relationship between virtue, virtues, virtuous, and virtuousness?

RQ 1c: How does virtue differ from other similar concepts?

RQ 1d: How do we know what is virtuous in which contexts?

Research questions 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d are examined in Chapter 3. By exploring these questions, I make several contributions to the field of POI. The field of POI includes countless references to the notion of virtue, but the concept is rarely defined. The importance of contributing a reconceptualization of virtue to the field of POI is that it is only upon clear concepts that good theory can be built (Suddaby, 2010). Currently the terms virtue, virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtu*ousness* are largely used interchangeably; distinguishing between them contributes further clarity to my reconceptualization of virtue. Additionally, by explaining how virtue is different to other, similar concepts such as values, organizational citizenship

behaviors, and corporate social responsibility, I articulate boundary conditions of virtue so that it might be more easily understood as unique.

Furthermore, I develop a framework to address research question 1d, *How do we know what is virtuous in which contexts?* This framework sheds light on the contextually sensitive, universal and unitary nature of virtue while proffering a usable tool to guide understanding and action. This framework may have ramifications for current contradictions within POI pertaining to what 'the' virtues are. Additionally, it may spark further theoretical development or empirical testing within AVE or POI to refine its accuracy and usefulness in determining what is virtuous in which contexts. In sum, by answering research questions 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d in Chapter 3, I contribute to the field of POI a clear reconceptualization of virtue to inform more robust future theory building and advance a well-grounded virtue perspective.

RQ 2a: What is *good* leadership?

RQ 2b: How can scholars help practicing leaders to *be* and *do good*?

Research questions 2a and 2b are addressed in Chapter 4, which is written as a scoping review style journal article and has been invited for submission to *The Leadership Quarterly* Special Issue on Leader(ship) Development. By addressing these questions, I make theoretical contributions to the fields of leadership and leadership development. I do so by endeavouring to spur an approach within leadership development scholarship that values morality as much as effectiveness in the determination of good leadership. By positioning virtue as the locus of *good* leadership, and demonstrating the resonance between developing virtues and developing leadership, I advance a new virtues-based approach to leadership development.

Research question 2b arises in response to a chasm that remains between the theory and practice of leadership. Leadership literature boasts a plethora of theory, yet tangible

impact on leadership practice is questionable (Kellerman, 2012). By asking and exploring this question, I contribute a sharpened focus on how leadership scholarship can enable *good* leadership in practice. In advancing a virtues-based approach to leadership development, I also explore the program theory of TVP and proffer it as a program to do so. TVP has been operating for more than 30 years at a grassroots level; yet, so far as I am aware, it has never been theoretically or empirically evaluated as a leadership development program. Therefore, an important element of the conceptual analysis in Chapter 4 is that it represents a first introduction of TVP into scholarly conversations about how we might help leaders *be* and *do good*, and by so doing makes a contribution to bridging the gap between theory and practice.

RQ 3a: How does TVP align to extant theory and evidence?

RQ 3b: What outcomes might we expect leaders to achieve from TVP training?

Research questions 3a and 3b are addressed in Chapter 5. These questions descend from having proffered TVP as a program for virtues-based leadership development (Chapter 4) and by investigating these questions I make further contributions to the scholarly field of leadership development and also to the field of virtue ethics.

By pursuing answers to these questions, I contribute further theoretical understanding to the field of leadership development of if and how TVP may be expected to work as a leadership development program. More specifically, I articulate theoretical propositions based on the strategies of TVP, which can guide future leadership development scholarship, and in particular future large scale evaluations of TVP as a leadership development program. These propositions are developed by aligning the strategies of TVP to virtue ethics, socio-psychological theory pertaining to leadership, and in particular to the emerging theory of moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015). Moralized leadership argues the importance of recognizing a plurality of moral foundations and suggests leader behaviors that are likely to result in followers' positive moralization of leaders and followers' subsequent values-

congruent behavior (Fehr et al. 2015). As is discussed in Chapter 5, the behaviors recommended by Fehr et al. (2015) well align to the strategies of TVP and inform the crafting of my propositions.

Additionally, by exploring research question 3b, I contribute a methodological argument to the field of leadership development, which is the critical realist imperative to theoretically evaluate a program prior to field testing (Brousselle & Champagne, 2011; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). Aligning TVP to extant theory also makes a contribution to the field of virtue ethics. As stated above, in discussing the critique that virtue ethics fails to provide any guidance on how to live 'the good life', Julia Annas (2012) points to TVP as a practical application of virtue ethics. However, she warns that in its current form, TVP is "strikingly undertheorized" (Annas, 2012, p. 676). Theorizing TVP by aligning it to extant theory reinforces it as a program to implement virtue ethics in practice and therefore refute the critique that the philosophy is inapplicable.

RQ 4a: How can critical realist evaluation inform the study of leadership development?

RQ 4b: How do leaders experience TVP? And,

RQ 4c: What outcomes do leaders achieve as a result of TVP training?

Research questions 4a, 4b, and 4c are addressed in Chapter 6. These questions prompt theoretical contributions to the field of leadership development and virtue ethics. By discussing the question of how critical realist evaluation might inform leadership development studies, I advocate a more robust approach to leadership development research. A critical realist evaluation approach, I argue, accounts for more than whether or not a leadership development intervention 'worked' by administering cross-sectional surveys and assessing bivariate correlations (Antonakis, 2017) or measures of job satisfaction (Day et al., 2014). Critical realist evaluation provides a way to distil the contextual factors and key

mechanisms that explain *what* about an intervention works *for whom* in *which contexts* and *why*.

To address questions 4b and 4c, I conduct and report on the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program. By doing so, I further bridge the theory–practice divide by rigorously evaluating the practical, grassroots TVP. I also intend to bolster the contribution of TVP to the field of leadership development as a validated program for developing *good* leaders. By advancing TVP as an evaluated leadership development program, I aim to bring the field of virtue ethics into greater focus within the field of leadership. Taken together, my theoretical contributions to POI and leadership development culminate in a refined focus on developing *good* leaders and the promise of virtues-based leadership development as a means of doing so.

Contributions to Practice

I am deeply motivated to generate and propagate robust theoretical understandings that are accessible, meaningful, and applicable in practice. The primary contribution I make to leadership development practitioners and practicing leaders is a sharpened focus on virtues-based leadership development. In addressing my research questions, I attempt to highlight both my conceptual and empirical findings in a way that is meaningful to practice. While some of my research questions are focused more on theoretical contributions, others make clear contributions to practice, as I explain below.

Research question 1a asks, *What is virtue?* The importance of precise definitions may be of greater concern when generating theory than when leading organizations, but the subordinate questions of how virtue is different to other concepts (research question 1c), and how we might determine what is virtuous in which contexts (research question 1d) make clear contributions to practice. In exploring research question 1c, I articulate the distinctions between virtue and concepts often deemed similar, such as values, organizational citizenship

behaviors, and corporate social responsibility. In answering this question my work illustrates how virtue is unique and can exist both alongside, but independent of other concepts. And in answering research question1d, I construct a framework that can guide leadership development practitioners and practicing leaders in determining what behaviors are virtuous within their respective contexts.

Research question 2a asks, *What is 'good' leadership?* Providing an answer to this question places an emphasis on the importance of leader morality and virtue to leadership practice. Organizations care about leadership, and I suggest many leaders want to lead effectively. This indicates that issues of leader morality and virtue warrant greater attention. By discussing *good* leadership, I focus the attention of leadership development practitioners and practicing leaders on the nexus of virtue and leadership development and advocate a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders.

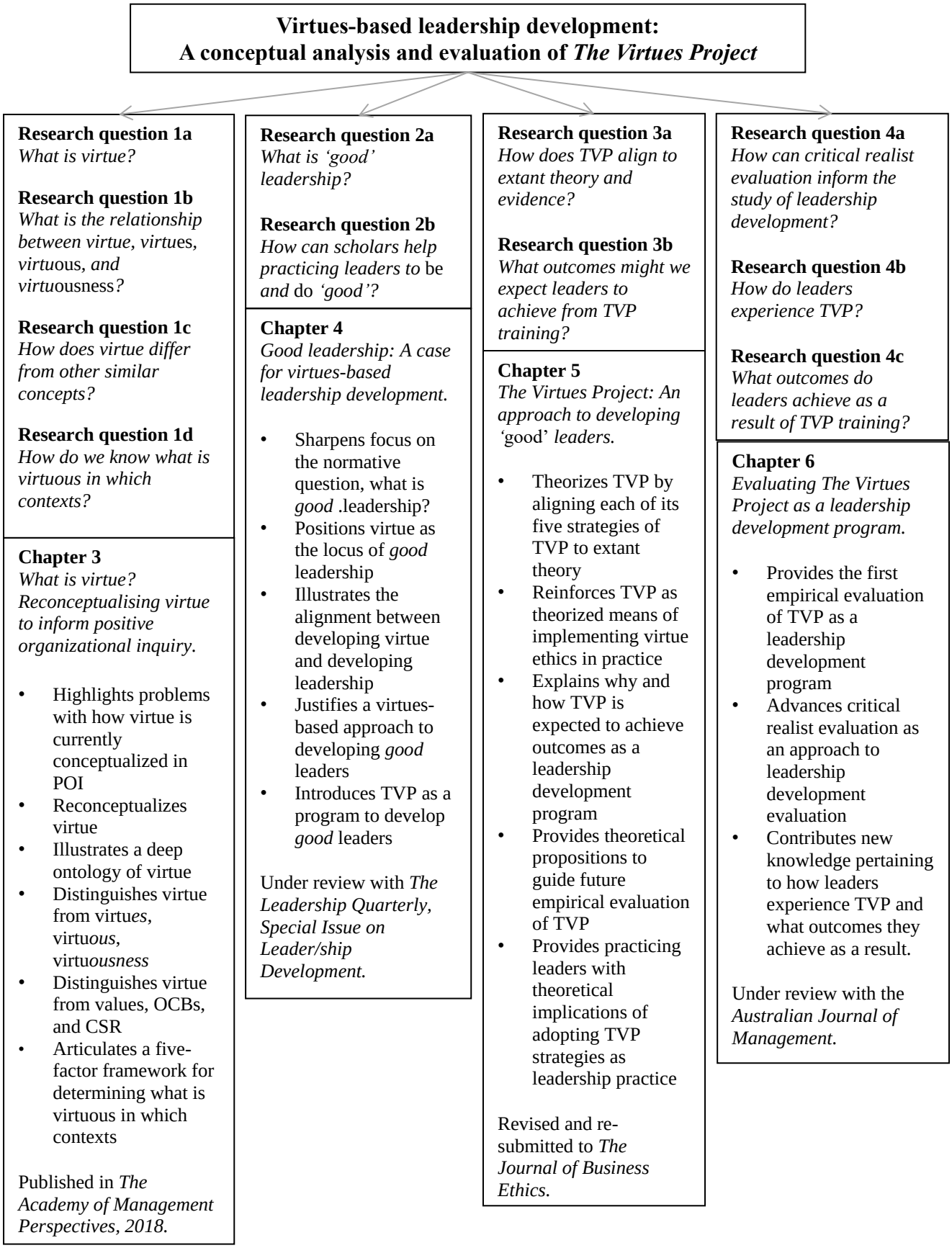
Research question 3a asks, *How does TVP align to extant theory and evidence?* My addressing of this question is driven by the critical realist imperative to theoretically evaluate an intervention prior to field testing (Brousselle & Champagne, 2011; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017); however, it also contributes to leadership development practice. Answering this question bolsters TVP, which is readily accessible to development practitioners and practicing leaders. By illustrating its theoretical alignment, the chapter adds to the credibility of TVP in organizational practice.

Finally, I anticipate the findings of my empirical study to further influence practice in adopting a virtues-based approach to leadership development. Research question 4b asks, *How do leaders experience TVP?* And, research question 4c asks, *What outcomes do leaders achieve as a result of TVP training?* By addressing these questions, I justify virtues-based leadership development as a preferred approach to developing *good* leaders, and advance TVP as a means of doing so.

An overarching contribution I make to practice is that the focus of my study, TVP, is readily accessible. My work does not develop and patent trade secrets or create closely guarded intellectual property, rather it lends theoretical rigor to an accessible grassroots program that has existed in practice for over 30 years. The focus of my work has been to take a program from practice, align it to theory, assess it empirically, and proffer it back to practice as a theoretically robust, empirically evaluated, readily accessible approach to developing *good* leaders.

Figure 1.1 illustrates my research questions as enumerated above and summarizes the contributions that flow on from each. The conceptual and empirical analysis I have undertaken in this thesis leads me to conclude that TVP has the potential to help people, especially leaders, *be* and *do good*.

Figure 1.1 – Research Questions, Expected Contributions, and Respective Chapters



POSTSCRIPT

In this chapter, I have explained the nature and structure of my thesis, and the rationale for my study. I have introduced myself as a leadership development practitioner and TVP facilitator with recognized bias towards learning how to best enable the development of *good* leaders. While personal on many levels and deeply reflexive, my conceptual and empirical analyses are underpinned by a commitment to academic rigour and informed by a critical realist research philosophy. As articulated above and summarized in Figure 1.1, Chapters 3-6 of this thesis have been prompted by research questions which emerged from my reading of the POI, leadership and leadership development, and virtue ethics literature. In responding to each research question, my thesis makes several important contributions to each scholarly field, as well as to leadership development practitioners and to practicing leaders.

In the next chapter I discuss the methods used in Chapters 3-6. The aim of Chapter 2 is to establish the rationale and justify the methods I employ in my efforts to address my research questions. I begin by explaining critical realism as the ontological orientation and research philosophy I adopt. Following which, I outline the methods I employ in my conceptual analysis (Chapters 3, 4, and 5). Lastly, I justify the methods used in my empirical study reported in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 1 REFERENCES

Annas, J. (2012). Being virtuous and doing the right thing. In R. Shafer-Landau (Ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology* (2 ed., Vol. 14): John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Antonakis, J. (2017). On doing better science: From thrill of discovery to policy implications. *The Leadership Quarterly, 28*(1), 5-12.

Aristotle. (350BCE/1962). *Nicomachean ethics* (M. Ostwald, Trans.): Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962.

Arjoon, S. (2000). Virtue theory as a dynamic theory of business. *Journal of Business Ethics*(2), 159–178.

Audi, R. (2012). Virtue ethics as a resource in business. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 22*(2), 273-291. doi: 10.5840/beq201222220

Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 315-338. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.001

Bakker, A. B., & Schaufelf, W. B. (2008). Positive organizational behavior: Engaged employees in flourishing organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 29*(2), 147-154. doi: 10.1002/job.515

Bass, B. M., & Steidlmeier, P. (1999). Ethics, character, and authentic transformational leadership behavior. *Leadership Quarterly, 10*(2), 181.

Bernstein, S. D., Cameron, K., Dutton, J., & Quinn, R. (2003). Positive organizational scholarship: Meet the movement - An interview with Kim Cameron, Jane Dutton, and Robert Quinn. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 12*(3), 266-271. doi: 10.1177/1056492603256341

Bright, D., Winn, B., & Kanov, J. (2014). Reconsidering virtue: Differences of perspective in virtue ethics and the positive social sciences. *Journal of Business Ethics, 119*(4), 445-460. doi: 10.1007/s10551-013-1832-x

Brousselle, A., & Champagne, F. (2011). Program theory evaluation: Logic analysis. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 34*, 69–78.

Brown, M. E., & Mitchell, M. S. (2010). Ethical and Unethical Leadership: Exploring New Avenues for Future Research. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 20*(4), 583-616.

Brown, M. E., Trevino, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*(2), 117-134.

Burke, R. J., Page, K. M., & Cooper, C. L. (Eds.). (2015). *Flourishing in life, work and careers: Individual wellbeing and career experiences*. Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing,.

Cameron, K. (2003). Organizational virtuousness and performance. *Ch 4 in Positive Organizational Scholarship, book by Cameron, Dutton, Quinn*.

Cameron, K. (2011). Responsible leadership as virtuous leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics, 98*, 25-35.

Cameron, K., Quinn, R., & Dutton, J. (2003). *Positive organizational scholarship: foundations of a new discipline* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Ciulla, J. B. (Ed.). (2014). *Ethics, The Heart of Leadership* (3rd ed.). Santa Barbara, California: Praeger.

Ciulla, J. B. (2004). What is good leadership? *Working Papers - Centre for Public Leadership*, 116-122.

Ciulla, J. B. (2017). Leadership, virtue, and morality in the miniature. In A. J. G. Sison, G. R. Beabout & I. Ferrero (Eds.), *Handbook of Virtue Ethics in Business and Management* (pp. 941-949): Springer, Dordrecht.

Conger, J. A. (1998). Qualitative research as a cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership. *Leadership Quarterly, 9*, 107-121.

Conger, J. A. (2004). Developing leadership capability: What's inside the black box? *Academy of Management Executive, 18*(3), 136- 139.

Dahlsgaard, K., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2005). Shared virtue: The convergence of valued human strengths across culture and history. *Review of General Psychology, 9*(3), 203-213.

Dawkins, S., Martin, A., Scott, J., & Sanderson, K. (2013). Building on the positives: A psychometric review and critical analysis of the construct of Psychological Capital. *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology, 86*(3), 348-370. doi: 10.1111/joop.12007

Day, D., Fleenor, J., Atwater, L., Sturm, R., & McKee, R. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 63-82.

Dinh, J. E., Lord, R. G., Gardner, W. L., Meuser, J. D., Liden, R. C., & Hu, J. (2014). Leadership theory and research in the new millennium: Current theoretical trends and changing perspectives. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*(1), 36-62.

Dokes, D. R. (2017). *Virtuous Leadership for Increased Business Growth.* (Doctoral dissertation), Walden University.

Donada, C., Mothe, C., Nogatchewsky, G., & de Campos Ribeiro, G. (2017). The respective effects of virtues and inter-organizational management control systems on relationship quality and performance: Virtues win. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-18.

Eisenbeiss, S. A. (2012). Re-thinking ethical leadership: An interdisciplinary integrative approach. *The Leadership Quarterly, 23*(5), 791-808.

Fehr, R., Kai Chi, Y. A. M., & Dang, C. (2015). Moralized leadership: The construction and consequences of ethical leadership perceptions. *Academy of Management Review, 40*(2), 182-209. doi: 10.5465/amr.2013.0358

Fleetwood, S. (2005). Ontology in organization and management studies: A critical realist perspective. *Organization, 12*(2), 197–222.

Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology - The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 218-226. doi: 10.1037/0003-066x.56.3.218

Fredrickson, B. L., & Joiner, T. (2002). Positive emotions trigger upward spirals toward emotional well-being. *Psychological Science (Wiley-Blackwell), 13*(2), 172.

Fredrickson, B. L., & Losada, M. F. (2005). Positive affect and the complex dynamics of human flourishing. *American Psychologist, 60*(7), 678-686. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.7.678

Gavin, J. H., & Mason, R. O. (2004). The virtuous organization: The value of happiness in the workplace. *Organizational Dynamics, 33*, 379-392. doi: 10.1016/j.orgdyn.2004.09.005

Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 47*, 55-130.

Hackett, R. D., & Wang, G. (2012). Virtues and leadership. An integrating conceptual framework founded in Aristotelian and Confucian perspectives on virtues. *Management Decision, 50*(5), 868-899. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00251741211227564

Hedges, K. (2014, May 2018). If you think leadership development is a waste of time you may be right. *Forbes*.

Kellerman, B. (2012). *The End of Leadership*. Broadway, New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Kozlowski, S. W. J., & Klein, K. J. (2000). A multilevel approach to theory and research in organizations: Contextual, temporal, and emergent processes. In K. J. K. S. W. J. Kozlowski (Ed.), *Multilevel Theory, Research and Methods in Organizations: Foundations, Extensions, and New Directions*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19*(2), 161-177. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.01.006

Luthans, F. (2002). The need for and meaning of Positive Organizational Behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*(6), 695-706.

Luthans, F., Avolio, B. J., Avey, J. B., & Norman, S. M. (2007). Positive psychological capital: Measurement and relationship with performance and satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology, 60*(3), 541-572. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2007.00083.x

Luthans, F., & Church, A. H. (2002). Positive Organizational Behavior: Developing and managing psychological strengths [and Executive Commentary]. *Academy of ManagemenI Executive*(1), 57.

Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success. *Psychological Bulletin, 131*(6), 803-855.

Newstead, T., Macklin, R., Dawkins, S., & Martin, A. (2018) What is virtue? Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 32*(4), 443-457. doi:10.5465/amp.2016.0162

Nielsen, K., & Miraglia, M. (2017). What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the ‘what works?’ question in organizational intervention research. *Human Relations, 70*(1), 40–62.

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*: Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2004.

Popov, L. K., & Smith, K. (2005). *The Virtues Project Educator's Guide: Simple ways to Create a Culture of Character. Rev ed*. Toronto: Ontario College of Teachers.

Porath, C., Spreitzer, G., Gibson, C., & Garnett, F. G. (2012). Thriving at work: Toward its measurement, construct validation, and theoretical refinement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 33*(2), 250-275. doi: 10.1002/job.756

Riggio, R. E., Zhu, W., Reina, C., & Maroosis, J. A. (2010). Virtue-based measurement of ethical leadership: The Leadership Virtues Questionnaire. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(4), 235-250. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022286

Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 5-14. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.5

Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress - Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist, 60*(5), 410-421. doi: 10.1037/0003-066x.60.5.410

Solomon, R. C. (1993). *Ethics and Excellence: Cooperation and Integrity in Business*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spreitzer, G., Sutcliffe, K. M., Dutton, J., Sonenshein, S., & Grant, A. M. (2005). A socially embedded model of thriving at work. *Organization Science, 16*(5), 537-549.

Suddaby, R. (2010). Editor's comments: Construct clarity in theories of management and organization. *Academy of Management Review, 35*(3), 346-357.

Wärnå-Furu, C., Sääksjärvi, M., & Santavirta, N. (2010). Measuring virtues - development of a scale to measure employee virtues and their influence on health. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences, 24*, 38-45. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6712.2010.00799.x

CHAPTER

TWO

Methods.

Chapter 2 is written as a conventional chapter.

PREFACE

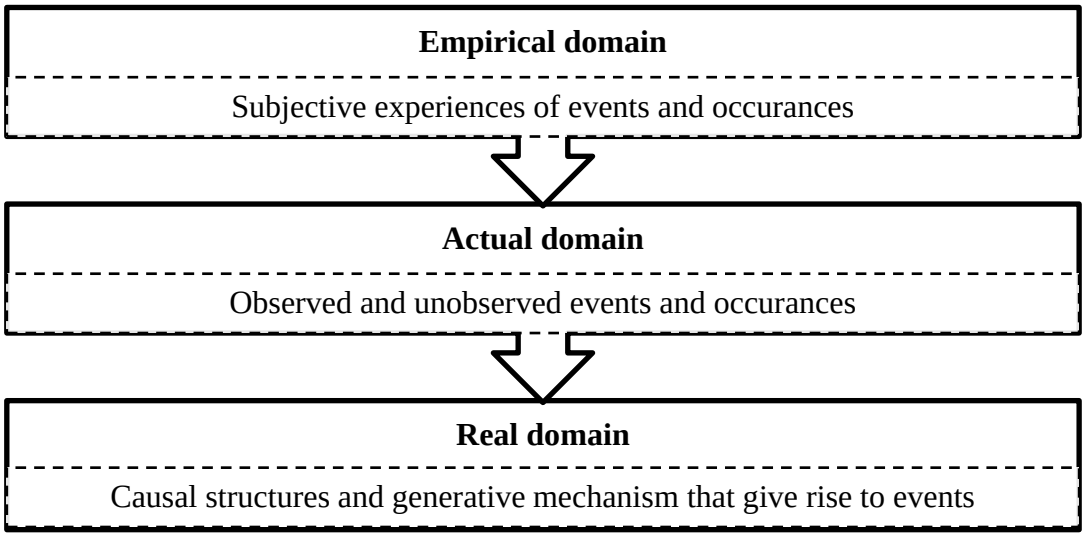
Chapter 1 introduced this thesis, explained the rationale for my studies, and described the context within which my research is situated. It also identified gaps in the literatures of positive organizational inquiry, leadership and leadership development, and virtue ethics which prompted the research questions I address throughout my thesis.

In this chapter I will elucidate the ontological underpinnings of my research orientation and justify the methods that guide my conceptual and empirical analyses reported in Chapters 3-6. I begin by explaining critical realism, with a particular focus on how its deep ontology influences my work. Following this, I provide a rationale for the methods used to inform my conceptual analysis in Chapters 3-5. Then, in the second part of this chapter, I provide a rationale for the methods used in my empirical study reported in Chapter 6. This will include a discussion of the strengths of critical realist evaluation and the suitability of longitudinal comparative case studies to evaluations of leadership development interventions. The chapter concludes with an overview of the data collection and analysis approach used in Chapter 6.

ONTOLOGICAL APPROACH: A CRITICAL REALIST ORIENTATION

Critical realism offers a way of observing and understanding the world that accounts for both individual subjectivity and an *underlying* truth. Truth, according to critical realism, is not necessarily what is seen, heard, or experienced; but rather that which *gives rise* to experience, or that which has *causal efficacy* (Edwards, O'Mahoney, & Vincent, 2014; Fleetwood, 2005). There are three domains to the ontology of critical realism. On the surface, the empirical domain reflects subjective experience, things we hear, see, smell, touch, and taste. Below the empirical domain is the actual; the domain of the events, interactions, and occurrences which we hear, see, smell, feel, and taste empirically. Below the actual is the real. The domain of the real is comprised of causal structures and generative mechanisms that give rise to events, which are then experienced subjectively (Edwards et al., 2014). Figure 2.1 illustrates the nested and emergent nature of the critical realist ontology.

Figure 2.1
The Deep Ontology of critical realism



The thread of critical realism runs throughout my thesis; it inspires my qualitative approach, lends depth to my analyses, and informs my reflexivity. The deep ontology (Figure 2.1) and research philosophy of critical realism inform my conceptual analysis in Chapters 3-5 and my empirical methods in Chapter 6. Within the critical realist orientation, it is generally

accepted that ontology has primacy (e.g. Bhaskar, 2014; Fleetwood, 2005); it is the notion of the nature of reality that sets the philosophy apart. Issues of epistemology or issues of how we come to know reality are considered secondary to the very nature of reality. I add the caveat that while I use critical realism to address my research questions, I do not attempt a review or extension of it as a research philosophy.

To explore the research questions in Chapter 3 concerning what virtue is and how it is related to but different from similar constructs, I apply the deep ontology of critical realism (Figure 2.1). This deep ontological framework helps me articulate a deep ontology of virtue and advance the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry. Chapter 4 builds on my deep ontology of virtue by illustrating how it intertwines with a deep ontology of leadership to produce *good* leadership. Also in Chapter 4, I address the critical realist imperative to understand an intervention's program theory (Brousselle & Champagne, 2011; Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017), by exploring two assumptions fundamental to the program theory TVP. In Chapter 5, my theorizing of TVP culminates in theoretical propositions based on the strategies of TVP, akin to the theoretical evaluation advocated within the critical realist approach (Brousselle & Champagne, 2011). Lastly, Chapter 6 reports on the findings of my empirical study, which is guided by critical realist evaluation.

The realist scholars I draw on are those who apply critical realism to the study of organizations, and in particular, those who advocate pragmatic methods, for example Kempster and Parry (2011), Fleetwood (2005), and Edwards, O'Mahoney, and Vincent's edited book, *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism* (2014). When applied to the evaluation of programs and interventions, critical realism is often referred to as realist evaluation, and work in this area (e.g. Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; Nielsen & Randall, 2013; Nielsen, Randall, Holten, & Gonzalez, 2010; Pawson &

Manzano-Santaella, 2012), was especially influential in the design and synthesis of my empirical study reported in Chapter 6.

Critical realism is not necessarily focused on power, oppression, or dominance, which prompts some to decry it as failing to be a truly critical philosophy (e.g. Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). However, the philosophy of critical realism provided depth and rigor to both my conceptual and empirical methods. Adopting a critical realist approach provided me a framework (namely the deep ontology), upon which to make my conceptual contributions. The deep ontology of critical realism helped me integrate virtue ethics philosophy and social science to clarify what virtue is, and to articulate what is virtuous in which contexts; as well as how virtue and leadership intertwine to produce *good* leadership – as will be discussed below. Adopting a critical realist approach also enabled me to conduct an empirical study that answered more than just, 'did TVP work' and instead to uncover what about TVP worked for whom in which contexts and why.

CONCEPTUAL METHODS

Conceptual analysis is an important aspect of research. Through conceptual analysis, previously siloed concepts, theories, and evidence bases can be synthesized to produce conclusions beyond the scope of a single empirical study (Rumrill & Fitzgerald, 2001). The guiding rationale for the conceptual analysis undertaken in my thesis (Chapters 3-5) is the critical realist imperative to theoretically evaluate a program or intervention prior to field testing (Marchal et al., 2012). In order to understand if or how TVP may be expected to work as a leadership development program, its program theory and the implicit assumptions guiding its design and implementation needed to be carefully unpacked. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 address progressively more precise questions about how and why TVP might facilitate the

development of *good* leaders. Each of these chapters is informed by a critical realist orientation.

Chapters 3 and 4 adopt a scoping review method (Rumrill, Fitzgerald, & Merchant, 2010), and Chapter 5 adopts a narrative review method (Rumrill et al., 2010). The scoping review method is used to guide more focused research and inquiry. Reviews of this nature contain a breadth of literature and include data from non-academic sources, such as TVP resources (Rumrill et al., 2010). Scoping reviews are recommended for their usefulness in informing the preliminary stages of a new research agenda (Rumrill et al., 2010). As such, this conceptual method well suits my efforts in reconceptualising virtue (Chapter 3), and advancing a virtues-based leadership development research program (Chapter 4).

To reconceptualize virtue, Chapter 3 first reviews literature from the field of positive organizational inquiry (POI) in order to focus attention on the problems with how virtue is currently conceptualized within that field. It also makes use of Aristotelian virtue ethics (AVE) literature to inform a proposed reconceptualization of virtue. The purpose of this work is to bolster the emerging virtue perspective within POI by proffering a more robust conceptualization of virtue, including how it is different to other similar concepts such as values or organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Chapter 3 culminates in a five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which context. The work of Chapter 3 is built on the deep ontological framework of critical realism, which allows for a clear articulation of virtue across the domains of the empirical, actual, and real. Prior to my application of the deep ontology of critical realism, conceptualizations of virtue (and interrelated but distinct virtu*es* and virtuous*ness*) had lacked clarity and depth. For instance, virtu*es* were sometimes considered traits and other times considered states; and virtuousness was attributed interchangeably to individuals and to organizations. The deep ontology of critical realism

allowed me to distinguish the generative mechanism of virtue, from the actual events of virtuousness, and the eventual attribution of discrete virtues (Newstead et al., 2018).

The scoping review conducted in Chapter 4 identifies the problem of theory proliferation within the field of leadership and highlights the need to focus scholarly attention on how to develop *good* leaders in practice. To justify a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders, Chapter 4 illustrates the sagacity between developing virtue and developing leadership by drawing on the deep ontology of critical realism to articulate a deep ontology of leadership which interacts with a deep ontology of virtue (Chapter 3) to inform *good* leadership. It does so by drawing on theory pertaining to organizational leadership, POI, and AVE. Within these literatures the theory of moralized leadership stands out for its orientation towards morality or 'goodness', its pluralistic underpinnings, and its fit with the premise and strategies of TVP. Chapter 4 makes a case for virtue-based leadership development and by excavating the program theory of TVP proffers it as a program to do so.

Chapter 5 adopts a narrative literature review method (Rumrill et al., 2010). Narrative literature reviews provide an opportunity to employ extant theory and evidence to focus future inquiry on a new topic and to construct theories or models that do so (Rumrill & Fitzgerald, 2001). Chapter 5 does this by incorporating theory and evidence from a range of fields and sources including POI, AVE, MFT, and moralized leadership to create a future research agenda focused on virtues-based leadership development, and to construct theoretical propositions of how and why TVP may work as a program to do so. An additional strength of narrative reviews is their ability to synthesise extant literature and articulate 'how to' strategies (Rumrill & Fitzgerald, 2001). Chapter 5 aims to do this by investigating how each strategy of TVP aligns to extant theories or notions of how to live and lead well. Chapter 5 builds on my deep ontology of virtue (Chapter 3) to discuss how TVP resonates with the philosophy of virtue ethics. More specifically, Chapter 5 aligns each strategy of TVP to

behaviors that the theory of moralized leadership suggests are likely to result in followers' positive moralization and subsequent values congruent behavior. In other words, Chapter 5 puts the strategies of TVP forward as 'how to' develop moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015). Chapter 5 culminates in theoretical propositions based on the strategies of TVP that explain how and why it is expected to work as a program to develop *good* leaders.

Despite the strengths of conceptual analyses (Rumrill & Fitzgerald, 2001), there are limitations to the contributions they can make. Most notably, conceptual analyses can be susceptible to issues associated with the subjective selection of studies, how prior studies and theories are evaluated, and the particular process of drawing conclusions based on reviewed material (Cooper & Rosenthal, 1980). These potential limitations are managed in part by the fact that my conceptual chapters consider defined bodies of theory (for example, Chapter 3 is informed by AVE, rather than all theory pertaining to virtue), and also by assessing the conceptual conclusions developed in Chapters 3-5 through my empirical study reported in Chapter 6.

EMPIRICAL METHODS

As outlined above, I adopt a critical realist evaluation approach to inform the methods of my empirical study (Chapter 6) because it advocates a pragmatic approach, employs qualitative methods to uncover the actual events and causal mechanisms affecting social processes (Modell, 2009), and provides a means of synthesizing findings that are transferable (Bhaskar, 2014; Greenhalgh, 2014). Critical realist evaluation is more concerned with *explanation* than *prediction* (Bhaskar, 2014). The pursuit of critical realist evaluation is to identify casual structures and generative mechanisms (real domain) and explain how they give rise to events and interactions (actual domain) that are then observed in the empirical domain. Critical realist evaluation provides an approach that goes beyond proving or disproving whether an

intervention works or not. Rather, critical realist evaluation seeks to understand *how* a program works (or does not work), including how it produces outcomes; for *whom*; *in which contexts* (Greasley & Edwards, 2015), and *why* (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). Accordingly, my empirical study (Chapter 6), seeks to understand how participating leaders experience TVP, what mechanisms are triggered, and how the triggering of these mechanisms results in leader outcomes attributable to TVP training. These questions necessitated qualitative methods, which often inform critical realist studies (e.g. Kempster & Parry 2011; Modell, 2009; Nielsen, Abildgaard, & Daniels, 2014).

Critical realist evaluation starts with crafting a guiding mid-range theory that articulates what is expected to happen (Marchal et al., 2012). Then data is analysed to synthesise context-mechanism-outcome configurations (Bhaskar, 2014; Greenhalgh, 2014; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; Nielsen & Randall, 2013). And, critical realist evaluation concludes with the production of a refined mid-range theory (MRT). As suggested by the name, MRTs sit somewhere between micro-hypotheses predicting correlations between specific variables, and macro-theories of unified behavior, change, and organizing (Marchal et al., 2012). Like conventional research propositions, MRTs are reflected in the design of critical realist field studies. Where propositions are dismissed, and hypotheses proved or disproved, however, MRTs are refined through the findings of field studies. MRTs are refined by synthesizing context-mechanism-outcome configurations.

Context is the centre of gravity for critical realist evaluation, which pursues context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations over traditional causal outcome investigations (Lacouture, Breton, Guichard, & Ridde, 2015; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). A focus on identifying CMO configurations reflects the deep ontology illustrated in Figure 2.1. What CMO configurations do is clarify which contextual factors are conducive to the triggering of what causal mechanisms (real domain), and how the triggering of said mechanisms result in

outcomes (actual domain). Once distilled, CMO configurations are articulated as testable models. To substantiate findings of critical realist evaluations, we ask: First, is it pragmatic? Does this model give us something we can actually work with? Can it guide action? Second, is it practically adequate? Does it explain what actually happens? And, third, is it plausible? Does it make sense in more than one context? (Kempster & Parry, 2011). Distilling CMO configurations and refining an initial MRT allows critical realist evaluation to distil findings that are transferable. This is not to say that all studies (including mine) will produce *generalizable* theory, but rather that explicating clear contextual parameters allows findings to be transferable when and where similar contextual factors are present, as is discussed further in reporting on my empirical study (Chapter 6).

While the strengths of critical realism and a critical realist evaluation guide my methods, I must reiterate that my thesis is not designed to extend or advance the methodological philosophy of critical realism. Some scholars and indeed some PhD theses are admirably dedicated to the advancement of critical realism, but for me, critical realism serves primarily as a guiding orientation. Critical realism grounds my ontology and provides me with a robust approach for meaningful evaluation.

Longitudinal Comparative Case Study

My empirical study, reported in Chapter 6, employs a longitudinal comparative case design informed by qualitative interview data. As mentioned above, the qualitative methods of my study fit the critical realist approach I adopt to answer my research questions regarding the causal mechanisms giving rise to leaders' experiences and outcomes resulting from TVP. Conventional quantitative randomized control trial studies can provide evidence of whether an intervention, such as TVP, works or not. But, rather than 'did it work', I wanted to know *what* about TVP had worked for *whom* and *why*, which a critical realist approach enabled me to do. A desire to understand the generative mechanism of the TVP intervention also led me

to employ a longitudinal comparative case study design for my empirical study. A longitudinal comparative case study design adheres to the tenants of critical realist evaluation and the leadership development literature.

Case study research, and in particular longitudinal comparative cases, aligns well with critical realist evaluation (e.g. Easton, 2010; Kessler & Bach, 2014), as well as leadership development inquiry (e.g Berg & Karlsen, 2012; Manz, Adams, Shipper, & Manz, 2011; McAlearney, 2006). Comparative cases are also preferred for exploratory research (Yin, 2003), and are "...especially appropriate in new topic areas" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 532) such as virtues-based leadership development. Furthermore, Moore (2012) suggests that case studies are, "... perhaps the most appropriate approach for exploring virtue in business organizations" (p. 368). A longitudinal comparative case study design was especially well suited to my evaluation of a virtues-based leadership development. Below I explain further why I employed a comparative case design, why my study was longitudinal, and why I used qualitative methods.

Case study research is preferred within the critical realist approach for its suitability to exploring "entities in context and to reveal underlying causative or generative mechanisms which reflect the interaction between structure and agency at different levels" (Kessler & Bach, 2014, p. 183). Kessler and Bach (2014) further suggest that comparing cases allows a researcher to uncover patterns, while single cases can result in an over-emphasis on a single context. Over-emphasis on a single context can run the risk of, "overlooking broader patterns and, in particular, losing sight of cross-cutting causal mechanisms" (p. 169). Comparative cases, on the other hand, "balance the lure of context...with a broader perspective, acknowledging and seeking to locate wider patterns and generative mechanisms" (Kessler & Bach, 2014, p. 169). Conducting multiple comparative cases helped to prevent the myopia that can occur with single case analysis and allowed me scope to zoom out far enough to

identify those cross-cutting mechanisms that are more readily transferable across contexts and generalizable to theory.

Comparative cases are powerful in testing theory, generating new theory, and are "especially useful for studying the new area of longitudinal change processes" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 548). The empirical study reported in Chapter 6, is essentially a longitudinal investigation of the changes resulting from leader training, which aligns with a comparative case design. While case analysis may not be as common as large quantitative tests of discrete constructs or theoretical models of leadership, the depth of description and the production of new insights makes case analysis particularly well-suited to investigations of the complex, multidirectional, multifaceted processes of leadership (e.g. Berg & Karlsen, 2012; Conger, 1998; Leonard & Goff, 2003; McAlearney, 2006).

As noted above, comparative cases are useful for analysing change processes over a period of time (Eisenhardt, 1989), which suggests the resonance between comparative cases and a longitudinal study design. My empirical study involved three distinct data collection points; time 1 (T1, pre- training), time 2 (T2, post training), and time 3 (T3, three months after the training), as illustrated in Figure 2.2. Employing a longitudinal design allowed for a comprehensive investigation of my research questions concerning how leaders experience TVP training and what outcomes are achieved as a result of the training.

Assessing interventions is not uncommon in the leadership development literature (e.g. Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009; Leonard & Goff, 2003), and longitudinal designs are favoured for this type of research. While longitudinal studies risk participant attrition, they are favoured for their ability to identify the complex relationships that play out between leaders and other-raters over time (Lorinkova, Pearsall, & Sims, 2013). Additionally, the nature of leadership development is inherently longitudinal, necessitating a similarly longitudinal method of researching the phenomena (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm,

& McKee, 2014). As illustrated in Figure 2.2, the longitudinal research design of my study included:

(i) Interviewing leaders and their peers, superiors, and subordinates (hereafter referred to as 'other-raters') to inform a baseline understanding of leaders' organizational contexts, professional roles, and leadership practices prior to the training (T1);

(ii) Observing the two-day TVP training;

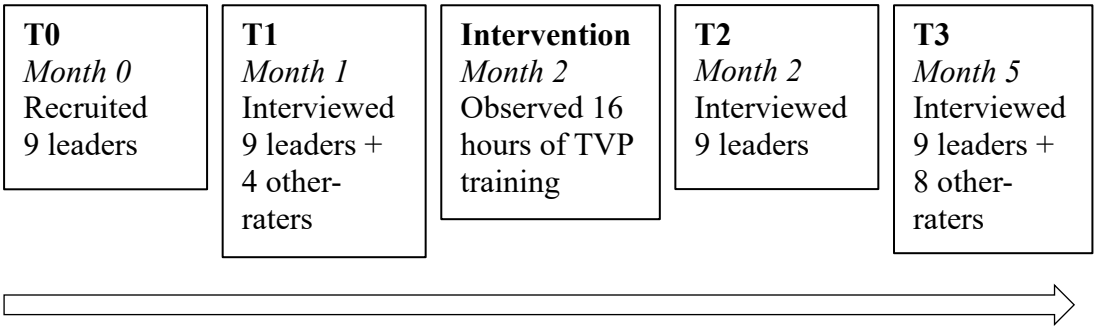
(iii) Assessing leaders' initial responses to the training (T2); and

(iv) Interviewing leaders and their other-raters to assess leaders' transfer of training and any outcomes they achieved as a result (T3).

Using multiple data collection points over the duration of five months enabled me to evaluate more accurately how leaders experienced TVP and what outcomes they achieved as a result, than a single data collection point would have. My design adhered to calls for longitudinal investigations of leadership development (Day et al., 2014; Lorinkova et al., 2013). Designing my study in this way reflected my intent to set a baseline for each leader (T1); then to capture their immediate responses to and experiences of TVP training (T2); and finally, to allow for their accounts of implementation efforts, transfer of training, and sense-making (T3) (Nielsen & Randall, 2013; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). The complete data set consisted of 27 leader interviews and 12 other-rater interviews. Twenty-seven leader interviews were conducted with the nine participating leaders across T1, T2, and T3. A further 12 other-rater interviews were conducted with 11 other-raters at T1 (four other-rater interviews) and T3 (eight other-rater interviews), as illustrated in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2

The Longitudinal Design of my Empirical Study



Because the study reported in Chapter 6 represents the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program, my research questions were intentionally exploratory, and exploratory research is better pursued through qualitative than quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 2015). Qualitative methods allowed me to probe the deeper mechanisms giving rise to leaders' experiences and outcomes, and to consider the perspectives of leaders *and* their other-raters. Qualitative methods accord with a critical realist approach as they entail the use of the iterative processes necessary to sift through empirical accounts to uncover the deeper mechanisms that give rise to them. Seeking in-depth understanding of the social mechanisms under investigation is best done using data from as many individuals, at as many different vantage points as possible (e.g. Christ, 2014; Edwards et al., 2014; Kempster & Parry, 2011; Zachariadis, Scott, & Barrett, 2013). To understand the processes of leadership development, the perspectives of others involved in the process (e.g. followers) need to be considered (e.g. Day, 2011; Day et al., 2014; Northouse, 2013). Collecting qualitative interview data from leaders (T1, T2, T3) *and* other-raters (T1, T3) was essential to answering the research questions about how TVP may result in outcomes for participating leaders.

Participant recruitment and case structure.

Individual leaders were the primary target of my recruitment efforts. Leaders were invited to participate via an Expression of Interest document I circulated among my professional networks. The TVP training workshop could only accommodate 12 participating leaders, as stipulated by the facilitator I engaged for the study, so my sample of leader participants was capped at 12. Leader participation criteria included that they were over 18 years old, managed at least three employees, provided individual consent and where necessary obtained organizational consent to participate. Once leaders had expressed interest and provided individual and organizational consent to participate, they served as gatekeepers to other-rater recruitment by forwarding a preformatted email to their other-raters at T1 and T3. The preformatted email included a link to a web form where other-raters could express interest in providing an interview. I contacted those who completed the web-from to arrange interviews. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and incorporated into my data analysis.

Relying on leaders to forward emails to their other-raters limited my potential other-rater sample as leaders were bound to be biased in whom they forwarded the email to. Furthermore, relying on other-raters to self-nominate for interviews contributed to lower response rates than what more direct recruitment methods might have. While this recruitment method may have restricted my other-rater sample size and diversity (leaders' bias likely dictated that they forwarded the email to other-raters with whom they had good relations), it was preferred over other more aggressive recruitment methods which may have risked dependency relationships between leaders and other-raters (especially in the case of subordinates), and power relations between me as the researcher and other-raters who could feel coerced to participate had I approached them directly.

In consideration of my maximum number of leader participants (12) and my relatively passive other-rater recruitment methods, I expected and obtained only a small sample of

other-raters. Accordingly, while quantitative measures were considered, they were omitted in the final design because a small sample size would render any statistical analysis insignificant. While mixed-methods would have been preferred, obtaining a sample of other-raters large enough to conduct quantitative analysis would have posed too great a risk to other-raters perceptions of coercion, or potential damage to dependency relationships. While a lack of quantitative data may be considered a limitation, it was mitigated by including other-rater interviews at T1 and T3 and by the rich qualitative data generated through three rounds of leader interviews. While small, a leader participant cap of 12 conforms to leadership studies some of which focus on a single leader (e.g. Pearce & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014), while others are characterized by participant pools as small as three (e.g. Nyberg & Sveningsson, 2014).

Once recruited, individual leaders became the foci of my comparative cases. The reason I conceptualized leaders as individual cases is because of context. Each leader participated in the same two days of training at the same time and place, and the training group could have served as the focus of a single case study. Participating leaders, however, came from a variety of positions and organizations, and personal and professional contexts. My aim was to explore how each leader experienced the training and what outcomes they achieved as a result. Therefore, the focus of my cases was not the context of the training, but rather, the respective organizational contexts and outcomes of each participating leader.

Data collection.

As discussed above, my longitudinal comparative case study encompassed qualitative interviews with participating leaders and their other-raters across three time points. Details regarding how I collected my data are reported in Chapter 6. In this section, I provide the rationale for the type of data I collected. First, I outline the nature of qualitative interviews,

before explaining the focus and intent of my data collection at T1, during the TVP training, and at T2 and T3 (as illustrated in Figure 2.2).

Interviews are interactive in nature. Critical realist interviews in particular are:

> [A] dialogue where the meanings, explanations, and emotions articulated by interviewees are taken seriously by researchers. Thus the interview as a process of human interaction involves the mutual construction of meaning and the possibility of the joint construction of knowledge about experiences, events, and activities. (Smith & Elger, 2015, p. 110).

This passage highlights the fact that in critical realist interviews, it is accepted, and to some extent expected, that the interview*er* plays a role in the interview process and in the construction of interview data. Compounding this factor is my experience as a leadership development practitioner and TVP facilitator. I maintained openness and honesty with my interview participants, and did not withhold my own experience, nor refuse to answer any questions interviewees asked me. I relied on my reading of critical realist and qualitative interview methods (e.g. Patton, 2015; Smith & Elger, 2015) and my experience of working with leaders to bolster my efforts to retain the focus on my interviewees' accounts, experiences, and realities.

I suggest that my experience working as a leadership development practitioner equipped me with an awareness of social desirability and questioning techniques to overcome it (Nederhof, 1985; Sarros & Cooper, 2006). Despite this, issues of social desirability and confirmation bias had implications for my methods. Confirmation bias is the tendency to seek or interpret evidence in ways that are supportive of pre-existing beliefs (Nickerson, 1998). As discussed in Chapter 1, I am deeply invested in the work of my thesis. I am a leadership development practitioner and TVP facilitator. I believe in the goodness of people and in the capacity of virtues to develop said goodness. The notion of confirmation bias implies that I was likely to interpret data in a way that supports my pre-stated beliefs. Relatedly, the notion of social desirability implies that leader participants would be likely to portray themselves

and their leadership practices in a favourable light (Nederhof, 1985). In acknowledgment of confirmation bias and social desirability I relied on rigorous reflexivity and my critical realist research orientation.

Practicing reflexivity in my study meant remaining aware of the varied and layered social realities and mechanisms at play within the focus of my study and within the processes of my research itself (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Janssens & Steyaert, 2009). Being reflexive meant being aware of my own biases and pre-existing beliefs. It also meant being aware of leaders' likeliness to represent themselves in a favourable light. The opportunity to interview each participating leader three times (T1, T2, and T3) as well as observing them for the two days of TVP training afforded me insights and rapport that equipped me in probing leader comments that seemed socially desirable. The inclusion of other-rater interview data also provided opportunity to triangulate leader self-reported data in an effort to account for socially desirable responses. Triangulation entails using more than one type of analysis to better understand complex social phenomena (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Collecting and analysing data from both leaders and other-raters regarding experiences and observations of leaders' leadership practices before and after TVP training and my observation notes made during training, therefore provided multiple aspects of analysis and helped provide a more robust and rigours analysis of what actually happened. Triangulating in such a fashion lends trustworthiness and credibility (Yin, 2011; Flick, 2007), and strengthened my analysis.

Issues of confirmation bias and social desirability could be argued to be present in any instance of social research, especially qualitative social research (Cassell & Symon, 2004; Conger, 1998; Patton, 2015). I maintain that in addition to reflexivity, my critical realist research orientation helped mitigate these issues. Critical realist inquiry does not accept empirical evidence at face value. *Truth* is not what is in recounted or experienced. *Truth* is that which is causally efficacious (Fleetwood, 2005). *Truth* is what gives rise to experiences

that are then experienced and recounted subjectively (Bhaskar, 2014). Critical realist interviews are processes whereby I, the interviewer, took seriously what my interviewees said (Smith & Elger, 2015). However, my processes of realist synthesis guided me in sifting through the layers of subjective empirical evidence, to the actual domain of those events and interactions that occurred, and eventually to the generative mechanisms that gave rise to the events and the experiences they influenced.

In sum, I acknowledge confirmation bias and social desirability, and I argue that by remaining reflexive and applying critical realist synthesis to drill down into that which is causally efficacious, my analysis was able to distil findings that accurately represent experiences and outcomes leaders achieved through TVP training. I will now detail the focus and intent of my data collection at T1, during the TVP training, at T2 and at T3.

Interviews at T1 employed a standardized open-ended interview structure (Patton, 2015). This is because I wanted to establish a similar 'baseline' understanding of each leader. My standardized T1 interview guide also informed my analysis to T1 interview data, as will be discussed below. The purpose of the T1 leader interviews was to gain an understanding of the leader's organizational context, developmental readiness, and any current leadership practices reminiscent of TVP strategies. Other-rater interviews at T1 were used to triangulate leader data pertaining to organizational context and leadership practices reminiscent of TVP strategies. By incorporating data from different sources in the identification of convergent themes, triangulation adds validity to findings (Creswell, 2014).

At T1, I sought to understand each leader's organizational context as this would help me gain a sense of the settings within which they were currently working and within which they would be attempting to transfer TVP training, or not. Focusing on organizational context reflected both the critical realist imperative to understand context (e.g. Delbridge & Edwards, 2013; Edwards et al., 2014; Kempster & Parry, 2011), as well as the importance of

considering situation and context in leadership development (e.g. Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Day et al., 2014; Graeff, 1983; Quick & Wright, 2011). To help me understand each leader's organizational context, T1 interviews included questions regarding the size and structure of the leaders' organization and their immediate work team, as well as the industry and the leaders' tenure with the organization and in their current role. I used other-rater interviews at T1 to triangulate this data by asking them open-ended questions about the nature and size of their organization and work team, and their relationship with their leader (e.g. peer, superior or subordinate).

At T1, I also aimed to assess leaders' developmental readiness. Developmental readiness has emerged as an important factor in understanding and enabling leadership development (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; 2009). The theory of developmental readiness is that the readiness of a leader is an influential determinant of their development. Avolio and Hannah (2008, p. 332) proposed that, "leaders with higher levels of developmental readiness in the right context will be better able to reflect upon and make meaning out of events, challenges, and/or opportunities that can stimulate and accelerate positive leader development". Assessing developmental readiness helped me understand which of the participating leaders may be best able to make meaning out of TVP and use it to accelerate their leadership practices.

There are a number of factors that can influence the developmental readiness of a leader, including the environment and context of the organization, especially perceived psychological safety and the degree to which the organization fosters a strengths-based approach, previous individual development efforts, learning goal orientation, response to critical feedback, self-complexity, and meta-cognitive ability (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). Hannah and Avolio (2008) suggest measures for each component of developmental readiness, including the 52-item Metacognitive Ability scale (Schraw & Dennison 1994) and the 20-

item Goal Orientation Inventory (Levy, Stroessner, & Dweck 1998). To avoid burdening participating leaders with lengthy surveys, I integrated questions about the discrete components of developmental readiness into T1 interviews with leaders. For instance, to assess developmental efficacy, I asked, "*When you undertake a new course or learning activity, how confident are you that you'll be able to acquire the skills taught?"* And, to assess leader complexity, I asked, *"In addition to your work role, what other roles do you fill in life (parent/volunteer/sibling/coach/etc)?"* Avolio and Hannah (2008; Hannah & Avolio, 2010) suggest that trained mangers can assess the developmental readiness of their employees. Based on this, and along with a careful reading of the developmental readiness literature, interviewing, and analysis, I used interviews at T1 to assess the developmental readiness of the participating leaders[4].

At T1, I also aimed to assess if or how participating leaders were already engaging in leadership practices that reflected the TVP strategies they would be trained in. As discussed in Chapter 5, the strategies of TVP echo good leadership practices. Therefore, to understand how TVP training might result in *changes* to participating leaders' practices, I needed to understand what they might already be doing that reflect the strategies they would be trained in. The five strategies leaders were trained in are summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Summary of TVP Strategies

Strategy		Summary
1.	Speak the Language of Virtues	*Using explicit virtues words linked to a specific context or evidence (specifying a situation or outcome) to acknowledge, guide, and correct behavior.*
2.	Recognize Teachable Moments	*Reflecting on a challenge or obstacle, considering which virtues may have enabled a better outcome, and articulating a better future approach.*

[4] My assessment of leaders' developmental readiness can be found in Appendix II, *Leader Reports*

3.	Set Clear Boundaries	*Using virtues language to create clear boundaries and expectations; and using virtues language to guide and correct behavior when it crosses agreed boundaries.*
4.	Honor Spirit	*Engaging in processes and practices that enhance physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.*
5.	Offer Companioning	*Companioning is a seven step listening process, whereby one person 'listens' another to his own best answer.*

Summarized from the TVP Educator Guide (Popov & Smith, 2005)

To assess if or how leaders were engaging in practices approximating these strategies prior to TVP training, my interview guide for T1 included questions that reflected each TVP strategy. For instance, to assess if or how leaders might be engaging in practices that reflected Speaking the Language of Virtues to Acknowledge, I asked, *"When a member of your team excels at something or shows a high level of effort, what do you do?"* To ensure my questions were targeted at the true intent of each strategy and the content of TVP training, they were reviewed by Linda Kalevin-Popov, co-author of TVP, who provided her approval of the interview guide (see T1 interview guide, Appendix I). Other-raters' interviews at T1 also included questions pertaining to their leaders' leadership practices that reflected TVP strategies. Doing so enabled triangulation of leader and other-rater data at T1.

The training leaders participated in was TVP's two-day Introductory Workshop which provided instruction in the five strategies of TVP (see Table 2.1). In pursing my own TVP facilitator certification, I completed a TVP Introductory Workshop (which is prerequisite to facilitator training) in 2014. This provided me with a firsthand experience of what leaders participating in this study would be exposed to. And, as a certified Virtues Project Facilitator, I could have delivered the training myself; however, doing so would have increased potential bias. Obtaining an external facilitator created more opportunity for leaders to relay their experiences and outcomes to me honestly. Had I delivered the training, leaders would have been expected to temper their interview responses in accord with the notion of social

desirability. Using an external facilitator meant leader participants could be honest with me in expressing their likes and dislikes from the training, without risk of causing me offense of hurting my feelings. Not delivering the training myself also meant I had less inherent bias, as I would be less swayed by social desirability myself; less likely to arrange data in a way to shine favourably on me as the facilitator.

I arranged for a facilitator from the United States to come to Australia to deliver the training. The facilitator I contracted was a Master Facilitator of TVP and had worked closely with the founders and authors of TVP for over 10 years. She had experience training and consulting throughout the USA and internationally based on her education and TVP background. Securing a facilitator of this calibre represented my attempt to ensure participating leaders received a true and effective TVP training experience.

In reflecting on a leadership development intervention he had evaluated, qualitative methodologist Patton (2015) stated, "...we would never have understood the program without personally experiencing it..." adding, "had we designed the follow up study without having participated in the program, we would have completely missed the mark and asked inappropriate questions" (Patton, 2015, p. 331). Likewise, I attended and observed the two days of TVP training, knowing that doing so would contribute to my understanding of the nature and content of the training as well as how leaders had experience it. During the training days, I observed the nonverbal responses of leader participants, made notes of the facilitator's approach including what content she covered and how, and I also made notes of how leaders participated in activities and the questions/comments they each shared.

The understanding I gleaned through my observations of the training also informed my interviews with leaders at T2 and T3. While my role as observer was somewhat removed from the group (Patton, 2015; Watts, 2011), the proximity and interaction I had with leader

participants contributed to the building of trust and rapport between the participating leaders and myself.

T2 consisted of interviews with each of the nine participating leaders in the week following TVP training. The main intent of these interviews was to collect data which would help me answer research question 4b, *How do leaders experience TVP?* Interviews were less structured at T2 than at T1, but I still employed an interview guide (see Appendix I). which, like T1, then grounded my analysis of T2 interview data, as will be discussed below. T2 interviews were informed by my observations of the training in that I had personal reference and recollections of leaders' participation in the training that I could follow up on in T2 interviews. T2 interviews were also influenced by my evolving relationship, rapport, and trust with each individual leader. To assess how leaders had experienced TVP, I simply asked each leader, '*What was it like?*' I followed this with more probing questions such as; '*What was good about the training?', 'What could have been better?', 'What was most valuable?* and *'What was least valuable?'* During T2 interviews, I also sought to gauge leaders' intent to transfer TVP training. This assessment of leaders' training transfer motivation helped to inform the questions for the third and final interviews with leaders at T3.

The focus of T3 interviews was to collect data that would help me explore research question 4c, *What outcomes do leaders achieve as a result of TVP training?* Leader interviews at T3 employed an open-ended interview guide (Patton, 2015) and were influenced by the trust, rapport, and relationship I had developed with each leader during previous interviews and TVP training days. I began T3 interviews by asking leaders how they had progressed their training transfer motivation, as reported at T2. T3 leader interviews were informed by the evolving relationship and my individualized knowledge of each leader. My T3 interview guide included probing questions that I used to draw out more from leaders, if and where needed (see Interview Guides in Appendix I). At T3, I was particularly curious

about what leaders had found most useful from the training, how or if they were using the training in their leadership roles, what kinds of changes they may be noticing in themselves and others, if or how the process of the training might have supported them better, and if or how they may have wanted further TVP training within their respective teams and organizations.

Other-rater interviews at T3 served as a rich source of data to inform any perceived shifts or changes among participating leaders. Where other-raters reported on changes they had observed in the leader following TVP training, it was a strong indicator that the training had been transferred and had had an effect. When and where other-rater reports triangulated with leader self-reports, even stronger evidence was provided. The T3 other-rater interview guide is included in Appendix I.

Data Analysis

In total, 39 interviews were conducted across the three data collection time points. This included nine interviews with leaders and four interviews with other-raters at T1; nine interviews with leaders at T2, and nine interviews with leaders and eight interviews with other-raters at T3. All interviews were audio recorded, annotated, transcribed verbatim, and the transcripts checked for accuracy. Interview participants were offered the opportunity to review their interview transcripts if they wished. Once finalized, interview transcripts were imported into N-Vivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software. I used N-Vivo to conduct both phase one (within-case analysis), and phase two (cross-case analysis) analysis of my data. The opportunity to look *within* each individual leader case (or 'subunit') and to analyze *across* all cases was a powerful way to produce rich analysis (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

For phase one, I conducted a within-case for each individual leader. As described above, my interview guides (Appendix I) provided a basis for initial analysis. Because I asked each leader the same questions at T1, I created broad 'parent nodes' within NVivo to

capture each leader's answer to these questions. Following this, I coded inductively into descending 'child nodes' as themes emerged. For instance, because I assessed each leader's developmental readiness, I created parent nodes for each of the components of developmental readiness (e.g. learning goal orientation, leader complexity, receiving critical feedback, developmental efficacy). Next, I coded each leader's answer to the corresponding question into the relevant parent node. For example, to assess developmental efficacy, I asked each leader, "*in general, when you undertake a new course or development activity, how confident are you that you'll be able to learn the new skills/knowledge?*" I then coded the leader's answer to that question into the parent node 'confidence in ability to learn'.

Once I had coded data pertaining to each question from my interview guide into the relevant parent nodes, I re-coded each interview and coded any other pertinent data into the initial nodes I had created. For instance, if a leader spoke about being confident in previous training settings, I would assign that data to the parent node 'confidence in ability to learn'. I also created other parent nodes where themes emerged that did not directly correspond to questions from my interview guide. For example, when a leader spoke at length about emotional intelligence, I created a parent node to capture this data. From here, I proceeded to code inductively into child nodes, capturing themes that emerged within leaders' answers and data assigned to parent nodes. For instance, at T1 I asked all nine leaders and the four other-raters about their understanding of virtues. Where respondents spoke about values in their answers to this question, I created a child-node for 'values' which sat under the parent node for 'understanding of virtues'

My within-case analysis concluded with the development of a leader report which provided a comprehensive analysis of all the data pertaining to each individual leader. This included the leader's three interviews (e.g. across T1, T2, and T3), my observations of the leader during TVP training, and the interviews provided by the leader's other-raters (e.g. at

T1 and T3). Each leader's within-case report was sent to him/her for comment and approval. Each leader responded that the report was an accurate representation of their experiences and outcomes and that no changes were needed. Within-case reports are attached in Appendix II.

Once I conducted the individual within-case analysis for each of the nine leaders, I then proceeded to phase 2 of my data analysis (e.g. cross-case analysis). For the cross-case analysis I created a new NVivo project and imported all leader and other-rater interviews into this new project (i.e. a total of 39 interview transcripts). A similar process as that used for the within-case analysis was applied for the cross-case analysis, whereby I first grouped answers pertaining to interview questions into parent nodes, then inductively coded according to themes I identified in the data.

For instance, at T2 I asked each of the nine leaders if they had implemented any of their learning from TVP training in their workplaces. To capture leaders' answers to this question, I created a parent node called 'implementation – already done and plan to do'. Within their answers to this question, seven leaders spoke about the effort required to make change. Accordingly, I created a child node called 'change takes effort' to capture this emerging theme. The NVivo extract below illustrates my parent node ('implementation – already done and plan to do'), the description of the node (this detailed inclusion and exclusion criteria for data assigned to it), and the child node ('change takes effort')[5] which sat underneath it.

Name	Description	Sources	References
T2		0	0
Implementation - already done and plan	INCLUDE: Data pertaining to what participants have already done, t	9	43
change takes effort	INCLUDE: data about the effort it takes to change, adopt strategies,	7	28

[5] The numerals under 'Source' indicate the number of interview transcripts I coded data from into this node, i.e. all nine leaders answered my question about implementation. The numeral under 'Reference' indicates how many pieces of data were coded to the node. In this instance there were 43 pieces of interview transcript coded into the implementation node and the 'child node' contains data from 7 sources (7 leader interviews) with a total of 28 pieces of data.

Conducting my cross-case analysis in this way made it possible to see where and when themes were emerging across the nine leader cases. It also allowed me to distil the contextual factors common to all nine leaders (e.g. their developmental readiness), and how these contextual factors fostered the triggering of the mechanisms that gave rise to leader outcomes following TVP training. The process of my two-phase data analysis, conducting first with-case analysis and then cross-case analysis reflects the critical realist processes of *abduction* and *retroduction*.

Critical realist evaluation synthesises findings by way of *abuction* and *retroduction*. Abduction consists of a thick redescription or reconceptualization of (usually) a causal mechanism or process that explains it (Bhaskar, 2014). And retroduction can be understood as manifested in mixed-methods triangulation (Kessler & Bach, 2014). These two processes are distinct, but often "shade into each other" (Bhaskar, 2014, p. vii). Essentially, what abduction and retroduction do is analyse data to produce explanations or hypotheses about the nature of the phenomena or structure in question, in a way that acknowledges a deep ontology and allows for the existence of the unobservable (Zachariadis et al., 2013). Put another way, it means "imagining a model of a mechanism, which, if it were real, would account for the phenomenon in question" (Bhaskar, 2014, p. vii).

Phase one of my analysis, my within-case analysis, provided a thick redescription of how each individual leader had experienced TVP training and any outcomes he or she had achieved as a result. This thick redescription represents the *abductive* process of critical realist evaluation, and the close examination of each leader's case as a distinct 'subunit' of my overall study (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Within-case analysis culminated in a case report for each participating leader (found in Appendix II). Phase two of my analysis consisted of cross-case analysis. Through cross-case analysis I distilled common contextual factors across each leader case that influenced the triggering of mechanisms that gave rise to outcomes. This

process of synthesis and explanation represents the *retroductive* process of critical realist evaluation. Conducting cross-case analysis ensured I did not fail to return to the 'global' issues (Baxter & Jack, 2008), they being the common generative mechanisms which gave rise to leaders' experiences and outcomes of TVP training. The findings from my data analysis are reported in Chapter 6.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Approval of the methods explained in this chapter was obtained from the University of Tasmania's Human Research Ethics Committee in October 2016, **(H0015780).**

POSTSCRIPT

In this chapter I have explained my ontological approach and critical realist orientation and provided justification for the methods used in my conceptual and empirical analysis. A critical realist orientation underpins and lends depth and distinction to my efforts to reconceptualize virtue (Chapter 3) and discussing how virtue informs *good* leadership (Chapter 4). The realist imperative to theoretically evaluate a program prior to field testing guides my theorizing of TVP in Chapter 5. And a critical realist evaluation approach guides my empirical analysis, designed as a longitudinal comparative case study, and the nature of my qualitative interviews. Critical realist evaluation also informs the synthesis of my findings, detailed further in Chapter 6.

The following chapter, Chapter 3, is prepared as a journal article and has been published in *The Academy of Management Perspectives.* In it, I address the research questions:

RQ 1a What is virtue?

RQ 1b What is the relationship between virtue, virtues, virtuous, and virtuousness?

RQ 1c How does virtue differ from other similar concepts?

RQ 1d How do we know what is virtuous in which contexts?

In addressing these questions, Chapter 3 contributes to future theory generation and refinement within the field of POI that may build on a clearer conceptualization of virtue. It also lays the foundation for investigating how virtue informs *good* leadership, and if or how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* leaders.

CHAPTER 2 REFERENCES

Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 315-338. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.001

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2008). Developmental readiness: Accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(4), 331-347.

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2009). Leader developmental readiness. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2*(3), 284–287.

Avolio, B. J., Reichardb, R. J., Hannah, S. T., Walumbwa, F. O., & Chan, A. (2009). A meta-analytic review of leadership impact research: Experimental and quasi-experimental studies. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*(5), 764-784.

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 544-559.

Berg, M. E., & Karlsen, J. T. (2012). An evaluation of management training and coaching. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 24*(3), 177-199.

Bhaskar, R. (2014). Foreword. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brousselle, A., & Champagne, F. (2011). Program theory evaluation: Logic analysis. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 34*, 69–78.

Cassell, C., & Symon, G. (Eds.). (2004). *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*. Sage Publications.

Christ, T. W. (2014). Scientific-based research and randomized controlled trials, the "Gold" Standard? Alternative paradigms and mixed methodologies. *Qualitative Inquiry, 20*(1), 72-80.

Conger, J. A. (1998). Qualitative research as a cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership. *Leadership Quarterly, 9*, 107-121.

Cooper, H. M., & Rosenthal, R. (1980). Statistical versus traditional procedures for summarizing research findings. *Psychological Bulletin, 87*, 442-449.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Forth Edition.

Day, D. (2011). Integrative perspectives on longitudinal investigations of leader development: From childhood through adulthood. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*, 561-571.

Day, D., Fleenor, J., Atwater, L., Sturm, R., & McKee, R. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 63-82.

Delbridge, R., & Edwards, T. (2013). Inhabiting institutions: Critical realist refinements to understanding institutional complexity and change. *Organization Studies (01708406), 34*(7), 927-947.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2 ed.). Thousand Oaks, California Sage Publications, Inc.

Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln (2017). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research.* EBook by Sage Publications.

Easton, G. (2010). Critical realism in case study research. *Industrial Marketing Management, 39*, 118–128.

Edwards, P., O'Mahoney, J., & Vincent, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism.* Oxford: Oxford University press.

Eisenhardt, K., M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review, 14*(4), 532-550.

Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2 ed., pp. 733-768). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

Fleetwood, S. (2005). Ontology in organization and management studies: A critical realist perspective. *Organization, 12*(2), 197–222.

Flick, U. (2007). Concepts of triangulation. *Managing quality in qualitative research*, 38-55.

Graeff, C. L. (1983). The situational leadership theory: A critical view. *Academy of Management Review, 8*(2), 285-291.

Greasley, K., & Edwards, P. (2015). When do health and well-being interventions work? Managerial commitment and context. *Economic & Industrial Democracy, 36*(2), 355-377.

Greenhalgh, J. (2014). Realist synthesis. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Hannah, S. T., & Avolio, B. J. (2010). Ready or not: How do we accelerate thedevelopmental readiness of leaders? *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 31*, 1181–1187.

Janssens, M., & Steyaert, C. (2009). HRM and performance: A plea for reflexivity in HRM studies. *Journal of Management Studies, 46*(1), 143-155. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6486.2008.00812.x

Kempster, S., & Parry, K. W. (2011). Grounded theory and leadership research: A critical realist perspective. *Leadership Quarterly, 22*(1), 106-120. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.12.010

Kessler, I., & Bach, S. (2014). Comparing cases. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lacouture, A., Breton, E., Guichard, A., & Ridde, V. (2015). The concept of mechanism from a realist approach: A scoping review to facilitate its operationalization in public health program evaluation. *Implementation Science, 10*, 1-10.

Leonard, H. S., & Goff, M. (2003). Leadership development as an intervention for organizational transformation a case study. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research, 55*(1), 58-67. doi: 10.1037/1061-4087.55.1.58

Lorinkova, N. M., Pearsall, M. J., & Sims Jr, H. P. (2013). Examining the differential longitudinal performance of directive versus empowering leadership in teams. *Academy of Management Journal, 56*(2), 573-596. doi: 10.5465/amj.2011.0132

Manz, C. C., Adams, S. B., Shipper, F., & Manz, K. P. (2011). Sustainable performance with values-based shared leadership: A case study of a virtuous organization. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, 28*(3), 284-296. doi: 10.1002/CJAS.184

Marchal, B., van Belle, S., van Olmen, J., Hoerée, T., & Kegels, G. (2012). Is realist evaluation keeping its promise? A review of published empirical studies in the field of health systems research. *Evaluation, 18*(2), 192-212.

McAlearney, A. S. (2006). Leadership development in healthcare: a qualitative study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 27*(7), 967.

Moore, G. (2012). Virtue in business: Alliance boots and an empirical exploration of MacIntyre's conceptual framework. *Organization Studies, 33*(3), 363-387. doi: 10.1177/0170840611435599

Nederhof, A. J. (1985). Methods of coping with social desirability bias: A review. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 15*(3), 263-280.

Nickerson, R. S. (1998). Confirmation bias: A ubiquitous phenomenon in many guises. *Review of General Psychology, 2*(2), 175-220.

Nielsen, K., & Abildgaard, J. S. (2013). Organizational interventions: A research-based framework for the evaluation of both process and effects. *Work and Stress, 27*(3), 278-297. doi: 10.1080/02678373.2013.812358

Nielsen, K., & Miraglia, M. (2017). What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the 'what works?' question in organizational intervention research. *Human Relations, 70*(1), 40–62.

Nielsen, K., & Randall, R. (2013). Opening the black box: Presenting a model for evaluating organizational level interventions. *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology, 22*(5), 601-617.

Nielsen, K., Randall, R., Holten, A., & Gonzalez, E. R. (2010). Conducting organizational-level occupational health interventions: What works? *Work & Stress, 24*(3), 234-259.

Northouse, P. G. (2013). *Leadership: Theory and Practice*: Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 6th ed.

Nyberg, D., & Sveningsson, S. (2014). Paradoxes of authentic leadership: Leader identity struggles. *Leadership (17427150), 10*(4), 437.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Pawson, R., & Manzano-Santaella, A. (2012). A realist diagnostic workshop. *Evaluation, 18*(2), 176-191.

Pearce, C. L., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2014). Virtuous leadership revisited: the case of Hüsnü Özyeğin of FIBA Holding. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 11*(3), 196-207.

Quick, J. C., & Wright, T. A. (2011). Character-based leadership, context and consequences. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*, 984-988.

Rumrill, P. D., & Fitzgerald, S. M. (2001). Using narrative literature reviews to build a scientific knowledge base. *Work, 16*(2), 165-170.

Rumrill, P. D., Fitzgerald, S. M., & Merchant, W. R. (2010). Speaking of Research: Using scoping literature reviews as a means of understanding and interpreting existing literature.*Work,* (3), 399-404.

Sarros, J. C., & Cooper, B. K. (2006). Building character: A leadership essential. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 21*(1), 1-22.

Smith, C., & Elger, T. (2015). Critical Realism and interviewing subjects. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism* (pp. 109-131). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Watts, J. H. (2011). Ethical and practical challenges of participant observation in sensitive health research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 14*(4), 301-312. doi: 10.1080/13645579.2010.517658

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization Science, 16*(4), 409-421.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Applications of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication.

Yin, R. K. (2011). *Applications of case study research*. Sage.

Zachariadis, M., Scott, S., & Barrett, M. (2013). Methodological implications of critical realism for mixed-methods research. *MIS Quarterly, 37*(3), 855-879.

CHAPTER

THREE

What is virtue?
Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry.

The material presented in this chapter has been published in the peer-reviewed journal, *Academy of Management Perspectives* and is re-produced here with permission.

PREFACE

The previous chapter explained my critical realist orientation and the critical realist underpinnings of my conceptual and empirical analysis. It also highlighted the importance of conceptual analysis in informing future research. My conceptual analysis responds to gaps identified within the fields of positive organizational inquiry (POI), leadership development, and virtue ethics. This chapter undertakes a scoping review to address research question 1a, *What is virtue?*

In order to advance theory, key concepts need to be clearly defined (e.g. Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Suddaby, 2010). Scholars in the field of POI are engaging in meaningful work on the processes, practices, and attributes that enable optimal human and organizational functioning. Much of this work incorporates the concept of virtue as an integral part of positive organizing. In this chapter, however, I argue that the effectiveness of this scholarship is undermined by poorly defined and misconstrued conceptualizations of virtue, which vary widely in their scope and perspective (Gotsis & Grimani, 2015). To address this issue, I draw on the philosophy of Aristotelian virtue ethics (AVE) and the deep ontology of critical realism to reconceptualize virtue and develop a five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts. These contributions advance a virtues-based perspective by providing a clearer definition of virtue to inform future theory building within the field of POI.

The material presented in Chapter 3 represents the first author's final proof of a journal article published in *The Academy of Management Perspectives*[6]. As this piece was co-authored, the personal pronoun is plural.

[6] This Chapter is a copy of my final author proof of the manuscript before it was published in *The Academy of Management Perspectives*. After my final proof, the manuscript went through copy editing and typesetting, and therefore there may be slight grammatical, stylistic, and formatting differences between this chapter and the actual published article:

> Newstead, T., Macklin, R., Dawkins, S., & Martin, A. (2018). What is virtue? Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 32*(4), 443-457. doi:10.5465/amp.2016.0162

This is in keeping with the UTAS 48T Guidelines for Incorporating Publications into a Thesis, which recognize that papers included in a thesis may be included as a word document (changed or unchanged from final/accepted version).

INTRODUCTION

Robust theory cannot be built on a shaky foundation; and a foundation of poorly articulated constructs will always be shaky. Building good theory starts with clearly defined concepts (e.g. Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Suddaby, 2010). The rapidly growing field of positive organizational inquiry (POI) pursues the understanding of positive processes, outcomes, attributes, and behaviors within organizational contexts (e.g. Cameron, Quinn, & Dutton, 2003; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012). Although virtue is often cited as central to these worthy pursuits, the concept of virtue is not clearly articulated within the field of POI. For example, virtue is sometimes conceptualized as discrete individual-level virtues such as humility, courage, compassion, or integrity (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012); and other times as macro level constructs such as organizational virtue (Heugens, Kaptein, & van Oosterhout, 2008), organizational virtuousness (Cameron, 2003) or organizational environmental virtuousness (Sadler-Smith, 2013). Furthermore, individual-level virtues have been positioned as both stable traits (e.g. Alzola, 2012; Dahlsgaard, Peterson, & Seligman, 2005), and as fluid, changeable states (e.g. Dutton, Roberts, & Bednar, 2010; Sison, Hartman, & Fontrodona, 2012; Weaver, 2006). Thus, while the concept of virtue is generally understood to relate to goodness or excellence, the lack of clarity regarding *what virtue actually is* ultimately hinders the advancement of virtue-based theory within POI and the contribution the field can make to management research and practice.

Therefore, this article aims to provide clarity to the notion of virtue as it applies to the field of POI. To do this, we will draw on the philosophies of Aristotelian Virtue Ethics (AVE) and critical realism. Specifically, we will discuss how the work of Aristotle and numerous virtue ethicists that have followed (e.g. Alzola, 2012; Audi, 2012; Beadle, Sison, & Fontrodona, 2015; Fontrodona, Sison, & Bruin, 2013; MacIntyre, 1999; Solomon, 1993), can provide depth to our understanding of virtue. Furthermore, we will integrate a critical realist

lens to provide a deep ontology that allows us to clearly articulate the emergent qualities of virtue in a way that captures the depth of AVE while remaining tangible enough to enable further theorizing and empirical investigation within the socially scientific field of POI.

In the sections that follow, we first review the value of virtue in organizational scholarship, before exploring some problems with the current conceptualization of virtue within POI. We then define virtue and illustrate a deep ontology to make sense of the difference yet interrelatedness of virtue and virtu*es*. Following which we explicate some key features of virtue and make clear distinctions between virtue and other seemingly similar concepts, including values, corporate social responsibility and organizational citizenship behaviors. Lastly, we present our five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous and in which contexts. This framework is not intended as a mechanism for generating a list of virtues. Rather, we position the framework as a model that can be adopted by researchers and practitioners to determine what is virtuous, within specific organizational contexts. In doing so, we respond to Suddaby's (2010) call to provide sharp distinctions around the defined concept (virtue) so that it might be distilled as an understandable category. In undertaking these functions, this article provides clarity to the concept of virtue so that it might provide a solid foundation for the advancement of a virtue perspective and the refinement of virtue-based theories within the field of POI.

THE VALUE OF VIRTUE IN ORGANIZATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

Much has changed in the millennia since Aristotle philosophized about the nature of human character and organized human activity – but as humans, we continue to engage in organized activity, and we still look to those around us to provide moral direction and meaning to our lives. Increasingly, our workplaces have become our contexts for identity construction (Dutton et al., 2010), our frameworks for moral and ethical conduct (Fehr, Kai Chi, & Dang,

2015), and where we look for meaning, belonging, and opportunities to flourish (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Michaelson, Pratt, Grant, & Dunn, 2014). Today, our *polis* is our workplace; our identities are derived less by who we are and what tribe we come from, and more by what we do and where we work. However, while we look for meaning, purpose and the conditions to flourish in our organizations, all too often, we do not find them. Many organizations fall short in providing the experience of community that is so essential to our wellbeing.

This is a complex problem with symptoms manifest at every level of organizations and evidenced in popular press, with a multitude of best-selling business books and blogs, management texts, and academic literature on topics such as presenteeism (e.g. Johns, 2009), engagement (e.g. Macey & Schneide, 2008; Saks, 2006), employee turnover (e.g. Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000), ethical and unethical leadership and behavior (e.g. Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Wart, 2014), and incivility, including discrimination, bullying, and harassment (e.g. Anderson & Pearson, 1999; Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2012). While most of these publications provide some sort of explanation or suggested solution to its issue of focus, the underlying problem of a disparity between the meaningful human community members desire and the modern organizations we have remains. Despite the complexity and contemporary emergence of this problem, we suggest virtue, as understood within the ancient field of Aristotelian Virtue Ethics (AVE), is the answer

Virtue is the core of AVE and has been a topic of philosophical inquiry for millennia. Put simply, virtue is the ‘goodness part of us’; the essence of moral character. Virtue is also the linchpin between individuals and groups, and the enabler of eudemonia or flourishing and meaningful community. At the individual, group, and organizational level, virtue offers the potential to address the negative consequences resulting from the mismatch between the communities we desire and the organizations we have. The philosophy of virtue offers not only a remedy to the symptoms of the problem (e.g. turnover, presenteeism, bullying,

incivility, or failings of leadership) – but an answer to the underlying problem itself. Organizations are communities based on human relationships in which individuals are "given a context in which to be meaningful" (Solomon, 1993, p. 84). We suggest that a well-informed virtue perspective might enable us to better understand how to create meaningful human connection and belonging within our organizations.

The majority of management scholarship focuses on cognitive, behavioral, and affective phenomena and understanding. But, what about the very essence of humanness? What about the soul Aristotle spoke of? What about our uniquely human desire to do good and live communally with others? Where does this essence fall within the triad of cognition, behavior, and emotion? In this article we argue that failing to recognize this ethereal, intangible, uniquely human quality may be one explanation for why many organizations fail to provide the meaningful human connection members desire. Adopting a virtue perspective, both within scholarship and practice, may allow us to more effectively understand the goodness part of us; the essence of moral character; the pursuit of eudemonia and how to activate the linchpin between individuals and groups so as to create organizations that provide the meaning, belonging, and connection so desired by members.

However, in order to advance a virtue perspective, we must be clear about what we mean by virtue. Since the time of the Ancient Greeks, the notion of virtue has experienced periods of banishment and a somewhat tarnished reputation. The terms 'virtue' and 'virtues' can carry connotations of religion, dogma, extreme conservatism, and an irrelevance to science. Reluctance to speak of virtue has been linked to the social-political separation of church and state, a dominant feature of many western societies which perhaps unfairly, assigned topics of virtue and morality to the domains of faith and religion, and thus 'off limits' to the study of organizations (Manz, Marx, Neal, & Manz, 2006).

Compounding the reluctance to speak of virtue is the fact that within academic dialogues, the topic remains conceptually unclear. Virtue is rooted in the Latin word *virtus*, meaning strength or excellence. It is widely acknowledged that virtues pertain to moral goodness; are the elements of moral character; have a positive human impact; and promote social betterment (Cameron, Bright, & Caza, 2004). However, like other complex and malleable concepts within the social sciences, the concept of virtue does not have a single universally agreed upon definition (Luthans & Youssef, 2008).

Meaningful communication between scholars and the accumulation of knowledge depends on clear constructs; clear constructs are the basis of "improving the relevance and rigor of organizational research" (Suddaby, 2010, p. 356). Without clarification of exactly what virtue is, advancement of a virtue perspective and our ability to address the problem underlying myriad symptoms plaguing our organizations – is limited. Hence, our undertaking in this article to clearly articulate the concept of virtue so that it can be applied within organizational scholarship.

PROBLEMS WITH HOW VIRTUE IS CURRENTLY CONCEPTUALIZED

While AVE offers a rich understanding of virtue, we propose POI is better suited to operationalizing, measuring, and possibly developing virtue in organizations. POI is an umbrella approach that covers the distinct fields of Positive Organizational Psychology, Positive Organizational Scholarship, and Positive Organizational Behavior. A cursory survey of POI literature reveals frequent references to the importance of virtue (Alzola, 2012), virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), virtuous (Cameron, 2013), and organizational virtuousness (Bright, Cameron, & Caza, 2006; Cameron, 2003). POI, in a somewhat fractured way, seeks to measure and develop virtue – but there remains a lack of clarity within the POI literature regarding the meaning of virtue, a gap that we suggest can be addressed by drawing

on the philosophical depth of AVE. The lack of clarity regarding the notion of virtue within the field of POI is evidenced by loose definitions of virtue, or instances where an understanding of virtue is seemingly assumed, and no definition provided, as well as various conflicting lists of 'the' virtues (e.g. Hackett & Wang, 2012; Solomon, 1992; Wärnå-Furu, Sääksjärvi, & Santavirta, 2010).

Using a deep ontology allows us to provide clarity to the concept of virtue, and the distinct yet interrelated concepts of virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtu*ousness*. Providing conceptual clarity also answers a fundamental critique of POI; a lack of serious explorations of the conceptual basis of key terms (Hackman, 2009). The centrality of virtue to POI has become increasingly explicit since Hackman's (2009) critique, yet there remains a lack of consensus or clarity around the notion. Currently virtu*es* are conceptualized as both individual and organizational phenomena. At the individual level, virtues are used as descriptive attributes (Whetstone, 2003), informing of moral agency and self-concept (Weaver, 2006), and elemental traits of character (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). And virtues are simultaneously applied as organizational level phenomena such as organizational forgiveness, organizational trust, and organizational integrity (Cameron et al., 2004; Williams, Kern, & Waters, 2015). Similarly, virtuo*usness* is sometimes applied to individuals, and sometimes to organizations.

Another example of conceptual confusion is the frequent blurring of the inherency versus instrumentality of virtue, with projects emerging which claim to harness virtue to increase business growth (Dokes, 2017) and performance (Donada, Mothe, Nogatchewsky, & de Campos Ribeiro, 2017), whereas others argue for the inherent value of virtue, that virtue is good for its own sake (e.g. Bright et al., 2006; Cameron, 2011, 2013). The application of virtue, virtues, and virtuousness varies widely in scope and perspective (Gotsis & Grimani, 2015). We do not intend to discredit previous work or theories of virtue; much excellent research has been produced. However, we do suggest it is time for a more unified

conceptualization of virtue so that our collective efforts might build more meaningfully upon one another.

DEFINING VIRTUE

When discussing virtue, authors frequently cite its Greek origins and general implications of rightness, goodness, and excellence without providing an explicit, coherent definition of what exactly virtue is. For instance, some suggest virtue is a practice (Whetstone, 2003), while others explain it as consisting of moral perception, emotion, belief and reasoning, and motivation (Curren & Kotzee, 2014). Virtue is often conceptualized as an excellence, such as "an exemplary way of getting along with other people, a way of manifesting in one's own thoughts, feelings and actions the ideals and aims of the entire community" (Solomon, 1992, p. 331). Virtue is also characterized as *right* or *good.* For instance, virtue is feeling and acting "at the right times, about the right things, toward the right people, for the right end, and in the right way…" (Sison & Ferrero, 2015, p. S84). Frequently, virtue is investigated as one or more distinct virtues such as forgiveness (Bright & Exline, 2012; Fehr & Gelfand, 2012), compassion (Dutton & Workman, 2011; Lilus, Kanov, Dutton, Worline, & Maitlis, 2012), or hope (Rego, Sousa, Marques, & Pina e Cunha, 2014).

A well-constructed definition consists of a differentia plus a genus; what 'it' is a part of, and by what 'it' is set apart (Locke, 2012). Suddaby (2010) explains that "clear constructs are simply robust categories that distil phenomena into sharp distinctions that are comprehensible to a community of researchers – that is, animal, mineral, or vegetables; gas, liquid, or solid" (p. 346). A definition of virtue needs to acknowledge that it is a construct composed of discrete virtu*es*. Thus, we define virtue according to Locke's (2012) requirements, and use the three layered ontology of critical realism to illustrate how our definition cascades to the related terms of virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtu*ousness*. In doing so, we

address Suddaby's (2010) call to provide sharp distinctions to the construct of virtue by outlining a five-factor framework to determine what is virtuous in which contexts.

A definition of virtue must capture its internal essence as intent, inclination, or desire, as well as its manifestation in thought, emotion, and action (Sison & Ferrero, 2015), as will be discussed in more detail below. Virtues are also innately human. We therefore suggest that the *genus* of virtue is *human quality*, and that its differentia is positive moral orientation, good, or excellence. Therefore, we define virtue as *the human inclination to feel, think, and act in ways that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good.*

The fields of AVE and POI are related, but distinct. A primary distinction between them is how they treat the notion of virtue. POI primarily treats virtues as desirable qualities of character, while AVE recognizes that virtue is also expressed and developed in actions, habits, character, and lifestyle (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; Sison & Ferrero, 2015). The compatibility of the two fields has been debated by a number of recent works (e.g. Beadle et al., 2015; David Bright, Winn, & Kanov, 2014; Sison & Ferrero, 2015). In brief, virtue ethicists tend to suggest that the positive paradigms over simplify the notion of virtue and reduce a rich notion to observable behaviors (Beadle et al., 2015). In contrast, from a positive social scientific stance, the idea of virtue put forward by virtue ethicists appears deeply complex and troublesome to conceptualize, operationalize, and measure. POI tends to regard virtue as character traits, with empirical investigation often focusing on one or two specific virtues, such as forgiveness (e.g. Bright & Exline, 2012; Fehr & Gelfand, 2012) or compassion (e.g. Dutton & Workman, 2011; Dutton, Worline, Frost, & Lilius, 2006). This approach allows for a more manageable way of bounding and measuring antecedents and outcomes in the traditionally scientific ways.

But AVE digs deeper:

> A virtuous character comes from the cultivation of virtuous habits. However, virtuous habits themselves result from the repeated performance of virtuous actions, and

> virtuous actions, in turn arise from one's having nurtured virtuous inclinations or tendencies. Virtuous inclinations and tendencies are precisely those that are in accordance with human nature and its final end. (Sison & Ferrero, 2015, p. S81).

This nested notion of virtue, as emerging from inclination and eventuating in virtuous character represents a deeper, richer understanding of virtue. It echoes Aristotle's sentiment that human nature is communal and rational, and that our final end is eudemonic wellbeing, or meaningful happiness.

We do not intend to reconcile these two robust fields. Rather, we aim to use a conventional western approach to AVE to provide richness, depth, and clarity to our understanding of virtue within the field of POI. As we will demonstrate, using the ontology of critical realism allows us to bridge the gap between philosophy and socially scientific inquiry by clarifying virtue in a way that acknowledges the richness and depth of AVE while simultaneously providing a framework for operationalizing and measuring virtuous behavior within POI. We are intentionally walking a fine line; attempting to provide clarity to the notion of virtue so that it can be understood and applied within POI while also retaining the richness inherited from AVE. We do not seek to define virtue in a way that will ultimately satisfy virtue ethicists. Instead, we seek to clarify and enrich our understanding of virtue within POI by drawing on the AVE tradition to provide a solid foundation for the advancement of a virtue perspective and the refining of virtue-based theory and empirical investigation. To capture the evolutionary nature of individual virtue and to illustrate the interrelatedness between our definition of virtue and individual virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtuo*usness*, we draw on the deep ontology of critical realism.

Using a Deep Ontology to Make Sense of Virtue and Virtu*es*

Critical realism articulates three layers of reality: the empirical, the actual, and the real (Edwards, O'Mahoney, & Vincent, 2014). We use these layers of reality to explain the distinction between virtue, and virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtu*ousness* in a way that acknowledges

the emergent qualities articulated by Sison and Ferrero (2015). The empirical domain reflects the subjective experience, things individuals hear, see, smell, touch, and taste. The domain of the actual is the domain of events; interactions and happenings that give rise to subjective experiences which are heard, seen, smelt, felt, and tasted. Below the domain of the actual is the domain of the real. The domain of the real is comprised of causal structures and generative mechanisms which give rise to events, which are then experienced subjectively (Edwards et al., 2014).

As shown in Figure 1, the deep ontology of critical realism illustrates that there is 'truth' but that 'truth' is that which gives rise to events and experiences. What we see and think may or may not be 'true', but what *gives rise* to what we see and think *is* true – truth is in the potential to have impact; those processes and mechanisms that churn away, often unseen, and give rise to life as we experience it (Edwards et al., 2014; Fleetwood, 2005).

Drawing on this layered ontology, we position virtue in the domain of the real. Virtue, we propose, is an internal locus; a fundamentally good human quality, intent, or inclination (Beadle et al., 2015; Sison & Ferrero, 2015). It is not seen in–itself but in its manifestation through thoughts feeling and actions and as expressed in behavioral events. That is, we suggest virtue is a generative mechanism; virtue has causal efficacy (Fleetwood, 2005) which gives rise to virtu*es.* Virtu*es* constitute thoughts, feelings, and actions that are generated by virtue (a fundamentally good quality, intent, or inclination). Virtu*es* arise out of virtue and reside in the actual domain. Virtu*es* are expressed and enacted as behavioral events. Events are then experienced subjectively in the empirical domain and made sense of as expressions of virtu*ous* behavior or virtu*ousness*.

Figure 3.1
The Deep Ontology of Virtue

Real domain	**Actual domain**	**Empirical domain**
generative mechanisms and structures which give rise to events	observed and unobserved events	subjective experiences of events
Virtue	**Virtu*ous***	**Virtues**
an inclination towards good	behaviors and characteristics arising from virtue	subjective interpretation of virtuous behaviors and characteristics

We will use an example to illustrate. Imagine three people in a room discussing a project. Individual **A**, with fundamentally good intention or inclination, voices a concern about the project. Individual **B** regards the raising of the concern as an expression of wisdom; the concern is valid and points towards a better approach to the project. Individual **C**, however, regards the raising of the concern as courageous – doing so could cause a backlash, but the individual did so anyway. Individual **A**'s *good inclination* is representative of her virtue, her internal inclination towards moral excellence. Her virtue is the mechanism that generates the behavioral event by which she voices her concern. Thus, this event is experienced and interpreted subjectively by individual **B** and individual **C** as two different virtu*es*; one individual makes sense of the behavior as wisdom, the other as courage.

Courage well illustrates how Aristotle characterized virtue as the golden mean between two vices. According to Aristotle's 'golden mean', courage represents the virtuous mean between cowardice and rashness. We would suggest that this iconic Aristotelian teaching complements our layered ontology as above; the process of inclination giving rise to actions, which are then experienced. While Aristotle's description of the golden mean is intuitive – we suggest there are more factors that condition the determination of virtue and

virtuous action. For instance, an individual may act at the mean between cowardice and rashness, but is he actually driven by good intent (indicative of virtuous inclination)? Or is he driven by fear or expectation of reward? And, does he act on his virtue knowingly? None of these questions are alien to the work of Aristotle (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962), yet all complicate the idea of virtue being simply a mean between to vices. Determining what is virtuous in which contexts will be discussed further below.

Using a deep ontology allows us to address what we deem a current weakness of POI. If the above scenario were assessed for the specific discrete virtue of creativity or gratitude, as is common within the field of POI, the underlying virtue giving rise to the event would have been missed. The scenario does not read as one of gratitude or creativity, and so would not have been assessed as either of these discrete virtu*es*. It does however, read as an expression of virtue. Broadening our virtue perspective to include a deeper awareness of how virtue originates as a mechanism that gives rise to action that is then experienced subjectively may open up the field of POI to more comprehensive investigations of virtue within organizations.

Key Features of Virtue

Building on our definition of virtue as *the inclination to feel, think, and act in ways that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good* we next move to highlight four features of virtue. The features have been identified from our review of the western virtue ethics literature and the literature within POI that deals explicitly with the notion of virtue. The four features are consistent with our proposed definition and serve to deepen our understanding of virtue – a rich philosophic term – within the social scientific pursuit of POI. The features we outline also support our aim to provide the clarity that will allow for the operationalization, measurement, and ultimately the development of virtue within organizations.

First, virtue is inextricably linked with the concept of character. Virtue is the *essence* of human character (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; Solomon, 1993). The ontology of critical realism helps clarify virtue's place in the domain of the real. Virtue is an internally located generative mechanism; an individual's virtue gives rise to thoughts, feelings, and actions that constitute events. Thus, we suggest that virtue is representative of human essence or moral character. Virtu*es* then, are the elemental building blocks of good character. Habituated practices of virtues such as courage, humility, justice, fairness, and patience build an individual's moral character (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1999; Peterson & Park, 2006; Sison & Ferrero, 2015).

Second, virtue is learnable. Virtue can be learned with instruction, effort, and practice (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1999). It is widely accepted that "virtues are acquired by habituation or repetitive practice" (Arjoon, 2000, p. 162). Furthermore, "virtuous actions lead to and inspire more virtuous actions" (Bright et al., 2006, p. 255). By its very nature, virtue is good and uplifting for both the actor and the recipient. Virtues, demonstrated through behavior, are observable and can give rise to social learning, whereby one individual observes, learns, and imitates the behaviors of another (Bandura, 1977). Furthermore, the uplifting nature of virtue and virtues can inspire positive affect which in turn results in further virtuous acts in a contagion effect (Bright et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2004).

Third, virtue is the universal linchpin between individual and community. Rigorous historical analyses revealed that the discrete virtues of justice, humanity, temperance, courage, transcendence, and wisdom are shared by all peoples around the world and throughout time (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). And, as illustrated by our deep ontology, each of these virtues arises from a shared, unitary virtue. Virtue *is* essential to sustained human community (Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2006; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Solomon, 1992). Indeed, *"*...it is only through the acquisition and exercise of the virtues that individuals and

communities can flourish in a specifically human mode" (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 112). The pursuit of virtue is the path to achieving personal nobility, goodness, eudemonia, happiness – in a way that serves the common good (Wright & Goodstein, 2007). Not only does the cultivation of virtue enable meaningful, flourishing human communities, virtue is also essential to the very survival of human communities; we cannot coexist without virtue and the expression of virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Fourth, virtue is inherently good but may also have instrumental value. Virtue is good for its own sake; the very nature of virtue is its inherent goodness and moral excellence. However, as a generative mechanism virtue gives rise to virtuous behaviors, events, and experiences which have instrumental properties. Virtu*es,* have myriad instrumental outcomes, from allowing for sustained human community (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) to any number of empirically correlated outcomes, including thriving (Spreitzer, Porath, & Gibson, 2012), flourishing (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2015; Sison et al., 2012), and ethical behavior and decision making (Crossan, Seijts, & Mazutis, 2013; Hackett & Wang, 2012). While the inherency versus instrumentality of virtue gives pause for debate, using a layered ontology to illustrate the interrelatedness yet distinctness of virtue and virtu*es* or virtu*ousness* allows us to reconcile the debate by demonstrating that while virtue is inherent, virtu*es* and virtu*ousness* often have instrumental value; they are both means and ends in themselves.

Distinguishing Virtue from Similar Constructs

One of the central criticisms of POI is that it is simply old wine in new bottles. Hackman (2009) suggests that the shift to 'positive' organizational studies omits the long tradition of organizational behavior (OB) and organizational development (OD) which already dealt with a number of positive phenomena such as internal work motivation, team efficacy, self-actualization, authentic relationships, job enrichment, transformational leadership, high commitment organizations, quality of work life, growth satisfaction, and T-groups. We do not

dispute Hackman's (2009) position that the newer positive paradigms espouse constructs akin to the old OB and OD paradigms. However, we suggest that the explicit inclusion of virtue distinguishes POI from its OB and OD predecessors, and the explicit adoption of a robust conceptualization of virtue would further this distinction.

Hackman (2009) suggested that omitting previous research on positive phenomena weakens positive organizational studies, but we argue that the incorporation of virtue makes these newer paradigms more meaningful and connects them to a moral imperative. We mentioned earlier the hesitation to speak of virtue in modern western organizations. It has been further suggested that positive concepts within the fields of OD and OB which ultimately reflect virtuousness and virtuous behavior have been 'diluted' and 'disguised' with other terms, such as quality of work life, job enrichment, corporate social responsibility or prosocial behavior (Manz, Adams, Shipper, & Manz, 2011).

There are, however, some key distinctions between the notion of virtue and similar terms. And, as mentioned previously, part of good conceptualization is clear distinctions between one concept and other concepts (Suddaby, 2010). In practice, questions frequently arise about the relationship between virtues and values. The simplest distinction between virtues and values is that virtues are inherently good and universal, whereas values are culturally derived. Many people may value career progression and salary – but neither are virtues. Rather they are things we judge to have importance in our lives; they are values.

Comparisons are also often drawn between virtue and corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR is characterized by an organizations continued commitment to ethical economic development as well as the development of their people, families, communities and society at large. In short, CSR is an organization's obligations to society (Berger, Cunningham, & Drurmuright, 2007). Thus, a primary distinction between CSR and virtue is that CSR exists and is understood at the organizational level, manifest as systems, policies, and procedures,

whereas virtue originates at the individual level, as an internal inclination towards good or excellence. There is also the inherency of virtue – it is good for its own sake – which distinguishes it from CSR, which is focused on instrumental outcomes for the organization and society.

Similar to virtue, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) tends to be operationalised at the individual level. OCB can be conceptualized as unenforceable discretionary individual behavior that contributes to the effective functioning of the organization and is not explicitly recognized by a rewards system (Organ, 1997). Or, more simply, "discretionary employee behaviors that are helpful but not absolutely required by employers" (Dekas, Bauer, Welle, Kurkoski, & Sullivan, 2013, p. 219). OCB was initially conceptualized as consisting of five behavioral dimensions. However, over the years the number of dimensions expanded to 25, before being culled back to seven 'grouped' dimensions (Dekas et al., 2013). A concern highlighted by Dekas et al. (2013) is the implicit suggestion that the same set of behaviors will indicate OCB regardless of historical, demographic, cultural, or industry context. As we discuss in more detail in the following section, this issue is precisely why we propose factors for determining what is virtuous in a given context, rather than promoting a set list of virtues. The construct of OCB is also void of explicit reference to any moral philosophy, upon which and within which virtue is so deeply rooted. The fact that OCB is helpful to the organization echoes the idea of common good which is integral to the concept of virtue. However, there is a difference. The common good (virtue) is about the good of people as well as the organization; the common good is about a good *polis*, a good society, rather than just the good of the company. In comparison, the helpfulness of OCB may contribute to reaching key performance indicators or making budget but does not neccesarily contribute to the good of the individuals within the organization. Finally, the very name of the OCB concept, organizational citizenship *behavior* distinguishes

OCB from virtue, which, as we have defined emerges from an internal inclination or intent towards good or excellence.

A FIVE-FACTOR FRAMEWORK FOR DETERMINING WHAT IS VIRTUOUS IN WHICH CONTEXTS

As discussed earlier, Peterson and Seligman (2004) developed a catalogue of what they argued to be six universal virtues by applying strict criteria to a survey of the ancient texts of Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Ancient Greece, Judeo-Christianity, and Islam. The six universal virtues identified by Peterson and Seligman (2004) include: wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. The overall aim of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) classification was to provide an anti-thesis to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* by developing a catalogue of wellness and those qualities (virtues) that 'make life worth living'. Despite the comprehensiveness of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) catalogue and extensive reference to it within the field of POI, debates about listing virtues continue, with numerous conflicting efforts to enumerate which are *the* virtues, or which virtues are most important within the organizational context (e.g. Solomon, 1992; Wärnå-Furu et al., 2010), or leadership (e.g. Riggio, Zhu, Reina, & Maroosis, 2010; Sarros & Cooper, 2006; Sosik, Gentry, & Chun, 2012; Wang & Hackett, 2015).

Instead of arguing for one list over another, we suggest that no list entirely or definitively enumerates which are 'the' virtues, nor which virtues are most important. Rather, we propose that what is virtuous is determined by five factors: intent or inclination, agent awareness, context, alignment with *telos*, and outcome. We argue that these factors can serve as a framework for determining what is virtuous in different contexts, which we suggest may be more practical and more contextually and culturally relevant than proposing one list of virtues – especially when we consider that expressions of virtue are experienced subjectively

in the empirical domain. As illustrated in the layered ontology of virtue (Figure 3.1), those who experience virtuous behavioral events will make sense of them in a number of ways, including ascribing any number of virtues to same event, for example; where one sees honesty, another may see tact; or, where one sees wisdom another may see justice.

Our intent in outlining factors for determining what is virtuous in which context is to enrich to our proposed virtues perspective. Specifically, we suggest that these factors provide a method for determining virtue and virtuousness in a way that is broader and more comprehensive than assessing for any singular virtue such as gratitude or compassion, as POI investigations frequently do. These factors are also more comprehensive than ascribing virtuousness to any behavior seeming to fall between two opposed vices, as in a rough application of the golden mean. In order to illustrate how the five factors for determining what is virtuous in which context relate to the three layered ontology we used to define virtue, we will integrate reference to our ontology in the discussion and example below. The five factors we propose build on the three conditions for virtue put forward by Sison and Ferrero (2015). Table 3.1 illustrates how each factor may be applied to a specific context.

First, and as discussed above, virtue is deeper than an action or behavior. Virtue is an inherently good generative mechanism originating in the domain of the real (Figure 3.1). Virtue is an inclination or intent which *gives rise* to actions or events that express virtue subjectively interpreted as virtu*es* such as such as courage, wisdom, or humour. Therefore, similar to Sison and Ferrero (2015), we propose that for a quality or action to be considered virtuous, it must arise from virtue as an inclination or disposition. Thus, this first factor is twofold; first, it stipulates that virtue originates as a generative mechanism in the domain of the real. Virtue generates *feelings, thoughts, and actions that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good.* Beadle, Sison, and Fontrodona (2015) emphasise this point by suggesting that to ascribe virtue based only on observable behavior is to have failed to

fully understand virtue. Second, virtues arise from an inclination towards virtue. As Fineman (2006, p. 272) explains,

> [D]oing things for their own sake, such as for love, wisdom, and self-fulfilment, is virtuous. Doing them for the social betterment or advantage of others is virtuous. Seeking personal reward or recompense for ones efforts, such as profit, power, or prestige, is not virtuous....Displays of compassion and courage are, therefore, void of virtue if they are performed simply for personal recognition or applause.

Table 3.1

Factors for Determining What is Virtuous in Which Contexts

Factor 1: intent/inclination	Does the actor seek recognition or reward for his or her feeling/thought/action?
	Does the feeling/thought/action arise out of intent towards moral excellence?
Factor 2: awareness	How does the actor see his or her feeling/thought/action?
	Did the actor knowingly act in accordance with good intent?
Factor 3: contextual	Was the actor's feeling/thought/action appropriate to his or her temporal and cultural context?
Factor 4: *telos*	Does the feeling/thought/action align with the actor's higher purpose?
	Does the feeling/thought/action move the actor closer to the person he or she wants to be?
Factor 5: outcome	Is the outcome of the feeling/thought/action ennobling of the actor and the acted upon?
	Does the feeling/thought/action uplift the actor and the acted upon?
	Does the feeling/thought/action contribute to the common good?

The second factor in determining what is virtuous in which context is that an inclination towards virtue must be acted upon knowingly. "[I]f we are to conclude that

someone acted virtuously, we need to see not only what she did or said; we need to know how she saw what she was doing or saying" (Hughes, cited in Shotter & Tsoukas, 2014, p. 233). Virtuous behavior is guided by a knowing mind. Aristotle regarded prudence the primary virtue for its capacity to inform an individual how to employ the right virtue in the right way at the right time, acknowledging that, with practice, virtuousness can become habituated (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). This second factor resides at the intersection of the real and actual domains (Figure 1). To satisfy the factor, an actor must be inclined by virtue (mechanism) and choose to act or speak accordingly and knowingly (event).

The second factor relates closely to the third factor, which is the contextuality of virtues. Virtue must not only be acted upon knowingly, but also enacted in a way that is contextually appropriate. While the inherently good inclination of virtue may be universal, specific enactments of virtues are contextual, experienced in and responsive to culture and time. For instance, justice in ancient Rome looked much different to justice in modern Rome. The actual events (virtuous behaviors) that arise out of a virtuous inclination (real domain) vary according to temporal and cultural context, and must be enacted appropriately; "...virtue needs to account for character *and context*" (emphasis added, Bright et al., 2014, p. 445). Hence, the Roman tradition of crucifixion would not pass as justice in modern Italy.

The fourth factor we propose for determining what is virtuous in which contexts is the concept of *telos***.** *Telos* is our "point in living" (Barker, 2002, p. 1100); our raison d'être. Pursuing *telos* is what progresses us towards *eudaimonia*, or true and meaningful happiness (Barker, 2002). "Each individual is born or socialized (and each organization founded) for the pursuit of a specific goal or *telos*. This *telos* holds the key to deciphering the relevant set of virtues an actor must possess...relevant virtues are therefore determined by the goals an actor means to pursue" (Heugens et al., 2008, p. 102). Thus, virtuous action must be aligned with the *telos* of the actor. How does the action propel him towards his higher purpose, his

'point in living'? We suggest that this fourth factor resides at the intersection of the real and actual domain, where the actor's good intent (real domain) is knowingly acted upon (actual domain) in a way that aligns with his or her *telos*.

A final consideration when judging what is virtuous in which context is the issue of outcome. What *actually happens* as a result of the virtuous inclination which is knowingly enacted in a contextually appropriate way and in accordance with *telos*? This factor resides in the domain of the empirical, how the virtuousness is experienced and made sense of by those present. Virtues represent "the most ennobling behaviors, and the essence of humankind when at its best" (Bright et al., 2014, p. 445). Is the outcome of the behavior ennobling? Does it uplift the actor and the acted upon in a way that contributes to the common good? Is the world, in however micro a frame, a better place for the actions generated by virtuous inclination?

The factor of outcome (fifth factor) does not always align with the first factor of intent. Thus, although the intent may be good, the outcome may not always be ideal. For instance, when a bystander acts from good intent and jumps in the water to save a drowning man, the drowning man may still lose his life. A less than ideal outcome, despite good intent. However, if one considers the broader outcome; that the bystander acted on his virtue, that those witnessing the incident observed the event, and that loved ones of the drowned man know his rescue was at least attempted – it may still be classed as good (better, at least, than if the bystander had made no rescue effort) and thereby qualify as virtuous. A more mundane example highlights another aspect of the misalignment between intent and outcome. If someone's good intention prompts an act of honesty, whereby he shares his true thoughts or feelings with another, but, does so in a way that lacks tact or kindness and therefore hurts another, then this hurtful outcome may counter his good intent.

These five factors are not a mechanism for generating a list of virtues, nor are they synonymous with our deep ontology of virtue. Rather, by articulating these factors, we propose a framework (Table 3.1) which can be used by scholars and practitioners to determine for themselves what is virtuous, particularly within their organizational contexts. These five factors echo our ontology of virtue and attempt to answer Suddaby's (2010) call to provide sharp distinctions around the defined concept (virtue) so that it might be distilled as an understandable category. For a behavior or characteristic to fall into the category of virtue, we argue that it must satisfy the above factors. It must arise out of morally good inclination (in the real domain), be knowingly enacted (at the intersection of real and actual domains), contextually appropriate (in the actual domain), in accordance with *telos* (at the intersection of actual and empirical), and have an outcome that contributes to the common good or is ennobling for those involved (in the empirical domain). This does not tell us that loyalty is a virtue while faithfulness is not, and we suggest that the name given to the behavior or characteristic is less important than whether or not the behavior or characteristic satisfies the five factors articulated above. The reason being, the events that arise out of a virtuous inclination are experienced subjectively and may be labelled as any number of discrete virtues.

Again, we draw on a scenario to illustrate our point. Consider the following; a project manager receives a bonus for a project completed on time and under budget. The bonus consists of a $300 gift voucher, which he uses to take his team out for lunch. Team member **A** sees this as a sign of loyalty; the manager has demonstrated loyalty to his team by sharing his reward with them. Team member **B** sees it as humility; a demonstration that the manager recognizes the expertise and input of the team. While the manager himself views it as fairness; he simply couldn't have completed the project alone, and thus the reward belongs to the team.

The virtuous intent (factor 1) of the project manager gave rise to intentional actions (factor 2) which were contextually appropriate (factor 3) and in line with the manager's *telos* (factor 4) of being a decent person and a good manager, and the outcome was a rewarding lunch and an uplifted team (factor 5). Thus, the event satisfies the five factors of virtuousness. However, each person involved in the event ascribed a different discrete virtue; one as loyalty, one as humility, and one as fairness. And, the project manager's actions could have been explained as any number of other specific virtues; generous, kind, just, respectful, honorable.

The five factors we propose build upon our layered ontology and provide questions to help assess more comprehensively the virtue underpinning an action or event (as opposed to ascribing the 'correct' specific virtue). However, we put forth these factors with some caveats. The first caveat is our admittedly conventional western approach to AVE. Our efforts to advance the conceptualization of virtue within the field of POI will be enriched by future scholarship which might closely examine our suggested definition and five-factor framework to assess its applicability or adaptability to other approaches. A second caveat is that factors that reside in or at the intersection of the domain of the real (factors 1, 2, and 4) are troublesome for anyone other than the actor to assess. For example, how can we say with certainty that another acted from pure intent? Or that his actions were in line with his unique *telos*? This may be a future avenue for investigation, but it is our understanding that only the actor himself, in this case the project manager, can know his true intent and the conscious alignment of his *telos* and action. However, those around him, his team members **A** and **B**, can have their own individual *sense* or *judgment* of the project manager's intent and authenticity to *telos*. Thus, the application of factor 1 (good intent or inclination), factor 2 (awareness), and factor 4 (*telos*) are applied based on the witness's own subjective sense and judgment.

The simple example above, where a leader takes his team to lunch, provides a clear illustration of our five-factor framework. However, we acknowledge that real organizational events are far more complex. As per the caveat above, a spectator may not correctly assume the intent, awareness, or telos of an actor. Therefore, in response to a single scenario, spectator X may conclude it was virtuous, while spectator Y may disagree. For example, Gil was informed that the plant he managed would be closed in 12 months, at which point his 50 employees would lose their jobs. Gil was asked by his senior executive team to keep this news confidential in order to avoid industrial action or community backlash. Gil tried to convince the executive team to inform employees of the impending closure and built a case to keep the plant open, but to no avail. Unwilling to deceive his employees, Gil leaked information to his staff of the impending closure.

In this scenario, Gil broke confidentiality and loyalty to his senior executive in order to demonstrate loyalty and confidentiality to his employees. This tension between top management and managed employees is one commonly experienced by managers. As spectator X, we might conclude that Gil had acted on good intent by doing the 'right thing' by his employees (factor 1), and that he was aware of his actions including that they might result in union action or the termination of his own position (factor 2). We may also assess that Gil's actions were in accord with the current economic climate in which mechanization and globalization continue to threaten the traditional manufacturing sector and plant workers such as Gil's employees are commonly left unemployed, and thus contextually appropriate (factor 3). We might also ascribe Gil a *telos* to be an honest, decent person which he satisfied by telling the truth to his co-workers. And, finally, the outcome of Gil's actions, while they did not prevent the closure of the plant did at least give employees fair warning. Thus, spectator X would likely conclude that Gil's actions were virtuous within his given context.

However, we readily admit that spectator Y could ascribe Gil with a different *telos,* and might assume he acted from malice, such as with the intention to hurt the senior executive team rather than to help his employees. It could also be argued that Gil was unaware of if or how he was acting in accord with his intent. Any of these assumptions could lead spectator Y to conclude that Gil's actions were not virtuous in this context.

Providing this somewhat conflicting but more realistic example helps us illustrate two points. First, the person using our five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts will bare their own preconceptions, understandings, and judgements and two individuals might ascribe the same event in different ways. And secondly, in this article we have developed our five-factor framework as a retrospective assessment tool, something to be used to consider the virtuousness (or not) of an event as an alternative to assessing for singular virtues such as honesty or compassion as is common within the field of POI. However, its true benefit might be in its potential to guide future action. How might Gil's situation played out differently had his senior executive team used these five factors to guide their actions?

Despite how or if future scholarship might apply or adapt our five-factor framework, we maintain that it is more important to be able to determine whether an event or action arises from virtue, rather than to name the specific, 'correct' virtue associated with the event or action. The specific virtue ascribed to an event or behavior, comes, in part, from our own subjective perspective and may speak as much to the observer's *telos* and intent as that of the actor. Hence, the reason team members **A** and **B** both regarded the project manager's action as virtuous, but ascribed two different virtues. Our point is that the name we ascribe to a virtuous event is less important and more subjectively mediated than the factors identified above. Therefore, rather than prescribe a list of virtues, we propose the five factors of intent

or inclination, agent awareness, context, alignment with *telos*, and outcome for determining what is virtuous in which contexts.

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

To advance virtue perspective argued in this article, we need a clear conceptualization of what exactly virtue is. We have provided this by exploring a deep ontology of virtue and proposing a five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which context. A virtues perspective could be pursued by an array of future research within both AVE and POI. Within the more philosophic field of AVE future work may dig deeper into our ontology of virtue and five-factor framework or may review historical cases to assess how the framework overlays events deemed as virtuous or not, such as instances of whistleblowing or downsizing.

Within the field of POI, future research may consider the possibilities of measuring virtue, and virtu*ousness*, as distinct but also as more than the discrete virtu*es* such as gratitude or compassion which have until now been the focus of POI assessment. Investigations of positive practice and other enablers of flourishing, thriving, and positive organizing (e.g. Burke, Page, & Cooper, 2015; Cameron, Mora, Leutscher, & Calarco, 2011; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2015; Spreitzer et al., 2012) might be reviewed in light of the clarity we have provided here to the notion of virtue. The emerging field of neuroethics poses interesting questions regarding moral enhancement (Shook, 2012), which may provide alternative avenues for understanding a virtue perspective as may the application of neuroscience and the proposed ‘engineering of virtue’ (Jotterand, 2011). We also urge a review of the virtue ethics literature in combination with the current organizational intervention literature to provide guidance on how best to select, refine, or develop virtue development interventions.

Following which, empirical investigation could explore the process and outcomes of attempts to develop virtue in organizations.

CONCLUSION

When we go to work, many of us look for more than just a pay-cheque. Increasingly, we seek purpose, meaning, and connection in the work we do, among the people we do it with, and within the organizations we do it for. Business is first and foremost a human practice (Solomon, 1993). The virtue perspective argued in this article might allow us to better understand the essence of our humanness; our *virtue.* A virtue perspective might allow us to account for more than cognition, emotion, and action – to capture the very essence of our humanness and how it might be activated to foster the sense of connection and meaning we desire in our workplace communities. We have laid the foundation for the advancement of a virtue perspective by defining virtue as *the human inclination to feel, think, and act in ways that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good;* illustrating the deep ontology of this definition; discussing some key features of virtue; and articulating a five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts.

In short, we hope that a virtue perspective, underpinned with the conceptual clarity provided in this article, might foster a cross-disciplinary approach to better understand the very essence of those human practices that underpin organizations. We call for future scholarship to adopt and advance a virtue perspective that might broaden the focus of management scholarship to include a more meaningful consideration of the very essence of our humanness. Aristotle taught that to live a great life, one must live in a great *polis*. Today, our workplace is our *polis,* and the wellbeing of the organization and its members are inextricably linked (Solomon, 1993). Virtue is the ‘goodness part’ of the individuals that compose organizations, and it is the linchpin that allows individuals to meaningfully organize

and form community. Better understanding virtue within organizations is key to providing the community and meaningful connection members so desire.

POSTSCRIPT

In this chapter I have illustrated the practical value a virtue perspective can add to POI. However, the potential value of virtue in POI literature is currently limited due to shortcomings with current conceptualizations. By drawing on the deep ontological framework of critical realism and the philosophy of AVE, I identified key features of virtue and distinguished it from other similar constructs. Subsequently, I articulated a five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts and that poses a usable tool for both future scholarship and practice.

The following chapter, Chapter 4, builds on this clarified conceptualization and deep ontology of virtue to explain how virtue and leadership intertwine to inform *good* leadership. Chapter 4 undertakes a scoping review and advocates focusing attention on how scholars can facilitate the development of *good* leadership in practice. It also explores the assumptions implicit in the program theory of *The Virtues Project* (TVP) and begins to discuss how TVP aligns to the behaviors recommended as indicative of the moral foundations represented in the emerging theory of moralized leadership.

CHAPTER 3 REFERENCES

Alzola, M. (2012). The possibility of virtue. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 22*(2), 377-404. doi: 10.5840/beq201222224

Anderson, L., & Pearson, C. (1999). Tit for tat? The spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace. *Academy of Management Review, 24*(3), 452-471.

Aristotle. (350BCE/1962). *Nicomachean ethics* (M. Ostwald, Trans.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962.

Arjoon, S. (2000). Virtue theory as a dynamic theory of business. *Journal of Business Ethics* (2), 159–178.

Audi, R. (2012). Virtue ethics as a resource in business. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 22*(2), 273-291. doi: 10.5840/beq201222220

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, c1977.

Barker, R. A. (2002). An examination of organizational ethics. *Human Relations, 55*(9), 1097-1116.

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong - desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human-motivation. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*(3), 497-529. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497

Beadle, R., Sison, A. J. G., & Fontrodona, J. (2015). Introduction-virtue and virtuousness: When will the twain ever meet? *Business Ethics-a European Review, 24*, S67-S77. doi: 10.1111/beer.12098

Berger, I. E., Cunningham, P. H., & Drurmuright, M. E. (2007). Mainstrearning corporate social responsibility: Developing markets for virtue. *California Management Review, 49*(4), 132-157.

Branch, S., Ramsay, S., & Barker, M. (2012). Workplace bullying, mobbing and general harassment: A Review. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 15*(3), 280–299.

Bright, D., & Exline, J. J. (2012). Forgiveness at four levels. In K. Cameron & G. Spreitzer (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship* (pp. 244-259). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bright, D., Winn, B., & Kanov, J. (2014). Reconsidering virtue: Differences of perspective in virtue ethics and the positive social sciences. *Journal of Business Ethics, 119*(4), 445-460. doi: 10.1007/s10551-013-1832-x

Bright, D. S., Cameron, K. S., & Caza, A. (2006). The amplifying and buffering effects of virtuousness in downsized organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics, 64*(3), 249–269.

Brown, M. E., & Mitchell, M. S. (2010). Ethical and unethical leadership: Exploring new avenues for future research. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 20*(4), 583-616.

Burke, R. J., Page, K. M., & Cooper, C. L. (Eds.). (2015). *Flourishing in life, work and careers: Individual wellbeing and career experiences*. Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Cameron, K. (2003). Organizational virtuousness and performance. *Ch 4 in Positive Organizational Scholarship, book by Cameron, Dutton, Quinn*.

Cameron, K. (2011). Responsible leadership as virtuous leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics, 98*, 25-35.

Cameron, K. (2013). Virtuous performance. *Leadership Excellence, 30*(2), 9-9.

Cameron, K., Mora, C., Leutscher, T., & Calarco, M. (2011). Effects of positive practices on organizational effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 47*(3), 266–308.

Cameron, K., Quinn, R., & Dutton, J. (2003). *Positive organizational scholarship: foundations of a new discipline* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Cameron, K., & Spreitzer, G. (Eds.). (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cameron, K. S., Bright, D., & Caza, A. (2004). Exploring the relationships between organizational virtuousness and performance. *The American Behavioral Scientist, 47*(6), 766-790.

Cameron, L. D., & Spreitzer, G. M. (2015). Positive spirals: Practices that foster positive relationships. *Academy of Management Annual Meeting Proceedings*, 1-1. doi: 10.5465/AMBPP.2015.12478symposium

Crossan, M., Seijts, G., & Mazutis, D. (2013). In search of virtue: The role of virtues, values and character strengths in ethical decision making. *Journal of Business Ethics, 113*, 567–581. doi: 10.1007/s10551-013-1680-8

Curren, R., & Kotzee, B. (2014). Can virtue be measured? *Theory & Research in Education, 12*(3), 266.

Dahlsgaard, K., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2005). Shared virtue: The convergence of valued human strengths across culture and history. *Review of General Psychology, 9*(3), 203-213.

Dekas, K. H., Bauer, T. N., Welle, B., Kurkoski, J., & Sullivan, S. (2013). Organizational citizenship behavior, version 2.0: A review and qualitative investigation of OCBs for knowledge workers at Google and beyond. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 27*(3), 219-237.

Dokes, D. R. (2017). *Virtuous Leadership for Increased Business Growth.* (Doctoral dissertation), Walden University.

Donada, C., Mothe, C., Nogatchewsky, G., & de Campos Ribeiro, G. (2017). The Respective effects of virtues and inter-organizational management control systems on relationship quality andperformance: Virtues win. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-18.

Dutton, J. E., Roberts, L. M., & Bednar, J. (2010). Pathways for positive identity construction at work: Four types of positive identity and the building of social resources. *Academy of Management Review, 35*(2), 265-293. doi: 10.5465/AMR.2010.48463334

Dutton, J. E., & Workman, K. M. (2011). Commentary on 'Why Compassion Counts!': Compassion as a generative force. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 20*, 402-406.

Dutton, J. E., Worline, M. C., Frost, P. J., & Lilius, J. (2006). Explaining compassion organizing. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 51*(1), 59-96.

Edwards, P., O'Mahoney, J., & Vincent, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University press.

Fehr, R., & Gelfand, M. J. (2012). The forgiving organization: A multilevel model of forgiveness at work. *Academy of Management Review, 37*(4), 664-688. doi: 10.5465/amr.2010.0497

Fehr, R., Kai Chi, Y. A. M., & Dang, C. (2015). Moralized leadership: The construction and consequences of ethical leadership perceptions. *Academy of Management Review, 40*(2), 182-209. doi: 10.5465/amr.2013.0358

Fineman, S. (2006). On being positive: Concerns and counterpoints. *Academy of Management Review, 31*(2), 270-291.

Fleetwood, S. (2005). Ontology in organization and management Studies: A Critical Realist perspective. *Organization, 12*(2), 197.

Fontrodona, J., Sison, A., & Bruin, B. (2013). Editorial introduction: Putting virtues into practice. A challenge for business and organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics, 113*(4), 563.

Gotsis, G., & Grimani, K. (2015). Virtue theory and organizational behavior: An integrative framework. *Journal of Management Development, 34*(10), 1288 - 1309.

Griffeth, R. W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium. *Journal of Management, 26*(3), 463-488.

Hackett, R. D., & Wang, G. (2012). Virtues and leadership. An integrating conceptual framework founded in Aristotelian and Confucian perspectives on virtues. *Management Decisions, 50*(5), 868-899. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00251741211227564

Hackman, J. R. (2009). The perils of positivity. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 30*(2), 309-319. doi: 10.1002/job.587

Heugens, P. P. M. A. R., Kaptein, M., & van Oosterhout, J. (2008). Contracts to communities: A processual model of organizational virtue. *Journal of Management Studies, 45*(1), 100-121. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00738.x

Johns, G. (2009). Presenteeism in the workplace: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 31*(4), 519–542.

Jotterand, F. (2011). 'Virtue engineering' and moral agency: Will post-humans still need the virtues? *AJOB Neuroscience, 2*(4), 3-9.

Kozlowski, S. W. J., & Klein, K. J. (2000). A multilevel approach to theory and research in organizations: Contextual, temporal, and emergent processes. In K. J. Klein and S. W. J. Kozlowski (Ed.), *Multilevel theory, research and methods in organizations: Foundations, extensions, and new directions*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.

Lilus, J. M., Kanov, J., Dutton, J., Worline, M. C., & Maitlis, S. (2012). Compassion revealed. In K. Cameron & G. Spreitzer (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook fo Positive Organizational Scholarship* (pp. 273-287). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Locke, E. A. (2012). Construct validity vs. concept validity. *Human Resource Management Review, 22*(2), 146-148.

Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2008). Leverging psychological capital in virtuous organizations: Why & how. In C. C. Manz, K. Cameron, K. P. Manz & R. Marx (Eds.), *The virtuous organization: Insights from some of the world's leading management thinkers*. Hackensack New Jersey: World Scientific Publishers.

Macey, W., & Schneide, B. (2008). The meaning of employee engement. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1*(1), 3–30.

MacIntyre, A. (1999). *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues.* Open Court.

Manz, C. C., Adams, S. B., Shipper, F., & Manz, K. P. (2011). Sustainable performance with values-based shared leadership: A case study of a virtuous organization. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, 28*(3), 284-296. doi: 10.1002/CJAS.184

Manz, K. P., Marx, R. D., Neal, J. A., & Manz, C. C. (2006). The language of virtues: Toward an inclusive approach for integrating spirituality in management education. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 3*(1/2), 104-125.

Michaelson, C., Pratt, M. G., Grant, A. M., & Dunn, C. P. (2014). Meaningful work: Connecting business ethics andorganization studies. *Journal of Business Ethics, 121*(1), 77-90.

Organ, D. W. (1997). Organizational citizenship behavior: It's construct clean-up time. *Human Performance, 10*(2), 85.

Park, N., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2006). Character strengths in fifty-four nations and the fifty US states. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 1*(3), 118-129.

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2006). The incubator - Character strengths in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 27*(8), 1149-1154. doi: 10.1002/job.398

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*: Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2004.

Rego, A., Sousa, F., Marques, C., & Pina e Cunha, M. (2014). Hope and positive affect mediating the authentic leadership and creativity relationship. *Journal of Business Research, 67*, 200-210. doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2012.10.003

Riggio, R. E., Zhu, W., Reina, C., & Maroosis, J. A. (2010). Virtue-based measurement of ethical leadership: The leadership virtues questionnaire. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(4), 235-250. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022286

Sadler-Smith, E. (2013). Toward organizational environmental virtuousness. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 49*(1), 123–148.

Saks, A. (2006). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 21*(7), 600-619.

Sarros, J. C., & Cooper, B. K. (2006). Building character: A leadership essential. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 21*(1), 1-22.

Shook, J. (2012). Neuroethics and the possible types of moral enhancement. *AJOB Neuroscience, 3*(4), 3–14.

Shotter, J., & Tsoukas, H. (2014). In search of phronesis: Leadership and the art of judgment. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 13*(2), 224–243.

Sison, A. J. G., & Ferrero, I. (2015). How different is neo- Aristotelian virtue from positive organizational virtuousness? *Business Ethics: A European Review, 24*, S78-S98. doi: 10.1111/beer.12099

Sison, J. G., Hartman, E. M., & Fontrodona, J. (2012). Guest editors' introduction reviving tradition: Virtue and the common good in business and management. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 22*(2), 207-210. doi: 10.5840/beq201222217

Solomon, R. C. (1992). Corporate roles, personal virtues: An Aristotelean approach to business ethics. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 2*(3), 317-339.

Solomon, R. C. (1993). *Ethics and Excellence:Cooperation and Integrity in Business*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sosik, J. J., Gentry, W. A., & Chun, J. U. (2012). The value of virtue in the upper echelons: A multisource examination of executive character strengths and performance. *Leadership Quarterly, 23*(3), 367-382. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.08.010

Spreitzer, G., Porath, C. L., & Gibson, C. B. (2012). Toward human sustainability. How to enable more thriving at work. *Organizational Dynamics, 41*, 155-162. doi: 10.1016/j.orgdyn.2012.01.009

Suddaby, R. (2010). Editor's comments: Construct clarity in theories of management and organization. *Academy of Management Review, 35*(3), 346-357.

Wang, G., & Hackett, R. D. (2015). Conceptualization and measurement of virtuous leadership: Doing well by doing good. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-25.

Wärnå-Furu, C., Sääksjärvi, M., & Santavirta, N. (2010). Measuring virtues - development of a scale to measure employee virtues and their influence on health. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences, 24*, 38-45. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6712.2010.00799.x

Wart, M. V. (2014). Contemporary varieties of ethical leadership in organizations. *International Journal of Business Administration, 5*(5), 27-45. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/ijba.v5n5p27

Weaver, G. R. (2006). Virtue in organizations: Moral identity as a foundation for moral agency. *Organization Studies (01708406), 27*(3), 341-368.

Whetstone, J. T. (2003). The language of managerial excellence: Virtues as understood and applied. *Journal of Business Ethics* (4), 343-357.

Williams, P., Kern, M., & Waters, L. (2015). A longitudinal examination of the association between psychological capital, perception of organizational virtues and work happiness in School Staff. *Psychology of Well-Being, 5*(5), 1-18. doi: 10.1186/s13612-015-0032-0

Wright, T. A., & Goodstein, J. (2007). Character is not "Dead" in management research: A review of individual character and organizational-level virtue. *Journal of Management, 33*(6), 928-958.

CHAPTER

FOUR

‘Good’ leadership: A case for virtue-based leadership development.

The material presented in this chapter is under review with *The Leadership Quarterly* Special Issue on Leader(ship) Development.

PREFACE

The previous chapter, Chapter 3, drew on the deep ontological framework of critical realism and the philosophy of Aristotelian virtue ethics (AVE) to articulate a reconceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry (POI). It provided a clear definition of virtue, distinguished virtue from similar constructs, and developed a five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts.

Building on the deep ontology of virtue explicated in Chapter 3, Chapter 4, (which is currently under review with *The Leadership Quarterly* Special Issue on Leader(ship) Development), illustrates how the deep ontology of virtue and leadership intertwine to inform *good* leadership. It explores two questions: What is *good* leadership? and, How can scholars help practicing leaders *be* and *do good*? The answer to both questions, I argue, is virtue. I expand on this seemingly simple answer by drawing on the refined conceptualization of virtue presented in Chapter 3, the field of virtue ethics (e.g. Annas, 2012; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; Ciulla, 2014; Solomon, 1994), moral foundations theory and the related theory of moralized leadership (Fehr, Kai Chi, & Dang, 2015; Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009), and the deep ontological framework of critical realism (e.g. Bhaskar, 2014; Edwards, O’Mahoney, & Vincent, 2014; Fleetwood, 2005) to explain how virtue informs the *goodness*, or morality, of *good* leadership. This chapter will then explore the program theory of *The Virtues Project* (TVP), a grassroots virtues-development program, to assess its suitability as an application of virtue ethics, its alignment with moral foundations theory and moralized leadership, and its capacity as a program to develop *good* leaders. By spanning the philosophical potentialities of virtue and the actual practice of leadership development, this chapter takes a step towards understanding how virtues-based leadership development might enable leaders to *be* and *do good*.

The material presented in Chapter 4 comprises a journal submission currently under review with *The Leadership Quarterly, Special Issue on Leader(ship) Development.* As this piece was co-authored, the personal pronoun is plural.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations care about good leadership, and many leaders want to lead well (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). Yet, there is a substantial gap between the theories developed in research, and the actual practices of organizational leaders (Kellerman, 2012). Practicing leaders (and their organizations) are less interested in which theory or model of leadership is ‘right’, and more interested in how to effectively and efficiently develop to be the best they can be (Day et al., 2014). Increasingly complex, connected, and pluralistic organizational contexts add credence to the need to understand and develop *good* leaders in a way that accounts for such diversity.

Despite the substantial and rapidly growing body of leadership literature, there are a number of issues that remain under-explored, two of which will be the focus of this article. First, leadership scholars have invested immeasurable energy in defining and theorizing *leadership* when in fact it is *good* leadership that we seek to enable. And second, while the field of leadership development booms, it does not seem to be providing much tangible benefit to practicing leaders nor to their followers, organizations, and communities (Kellerman, 2012). In this article, we aim to explore these issues by examining two questions; what is *good* leadership? And, how can scholars help practicing leaders *be* and *do good*?

We propose that the answer to both these questions is virtue. Virtue provides a robust philosophy of ‘good’, which informs our focus on *good* leadership. Virtue is not the only determinant of *good* leadership, but, drawing on virtue ethics and moral foundation theory (MFT), we argue that virtue is the most fundamental determinant of good leadership and that it provides rich potential for meaningful leadership development that can be responsive to the diversity and complexity of modern leadership.

This article contributes to the leadership development literature, not by proffering a new theory of leadership, but by articulating a deep ontology of *good* leadership and

proposing an avenue for virtues-based leadership development. Leadership is a complex, multidirectional, multilayered phenomenon. Exploring a deep ontology of *good* leadership allows us to capture this complexity and illustrate how virtue informs *good* leadership at multiple levels. Following our articulation of a deep ontology of *good* leadership, we make a case for virtues-based leadership development. To do so, we explore the program theory (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013) of a language-based development program called *The Virtues Project* (TVP), with the aim of assessing its potential for translating virtue ethics into practice, (as suggested by Annas (2012)), and enabling the development of *good* leaders.

There are no published studies of TVP that investigate its theoretical robustness. Nor have there been any empirical studies of its efficacy in developing virtues and/or leadership in an organizational context. TVP has been flagged as a means of translating virtue ethics into practice, and simultaneously critiqued for being ‘undertheorized’ (Annas, 2012). By unpacking the program theory of TVP, we begin to address this critique and advance it as a virtues-based approach to leadership development. In other words, this article informs future research by clarifying (i) what is *good* leadership and (ii) by discussing how scholars can help practicing leaders *be* and *do good* by exploring a potentially fruitful development program. In order to examine the two questions central to this article, we will first discuss how the intersection of virtue and leadership inform *good* leadership, before exploring how virtues-based development might enable leaders to *be* and *do good*.

WHAT IS ‘GOOD’ LEADERSHIP?

Leadership needs to be good because “in leadership we see morality magnified” (Ciulla, 2003, p. xi). Ciulla (2014) explains leadership as “a complex moral relationship between people based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision for the common good” (p. xv). Leaders’ actions, both good and bad, can have a profound impact on the moral

climates of their organizations and the wellbeing of those they lead; therefore, it is important to understand what constitutes *good* leadership.

We draw on a normative virtue ethics perspective to identify two aspects of *good* leadership: character and competence (Ciulla, 2004, 2014; Hannah & Avolio, 2011), and integrate the descriptive MFT to illustrate how a virtues approach can account for a plurality of moral foundations (Fehr et al., 2015; Graham et al., 2012). MFT recognizes that individuals are likely to moralize or deem ‘good’ those behaviors that resonate with their own moral orientation (Fehr et al., 2015). MFT explains that individual moral orientations are grounded in six identified foundations including, care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, sanctity/degradation, authority/subversion, liberty/oppression. These six foundations represent greater plurality than do the dual foundations of care and justice which are centralized to most theories of ethical leadership (Fehr et al., 2015).

A virtue ethics perspective tells us that for leadership to be *good* it must be both moral (stemming from the leader’s character) and effective (stemming from the leader’s competence) (Ciulla, 2004). Leader effectiveness is important; however, it is not the primary focus of this article. Our primary focus is leader morality, and thus character. In our view, while leader effectiveness may correlate with the ends a leader achieves, character and morality are embedded in the leader’s means, which are in part also the ends of leadership. Can we really consider it *good* leadership if a leader is effective in achieving outcomes, but does so in an immoral way? We suggest that the effectiveness of a leader takes a backseat to the morality or virtue of the means and ends he or she pursues and that it is the virtue embedded in a leader’s means and ends that constitutes the *good* in good leadership.

Virtue also allows for a plurality of moral foundations. Previous work in the field of ethical leadership has tended to focus on only two moral foundations; care and justice (e.g. Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005). While important, this work lacks an account for other

moral foundations such as loyalty, sanctity, authority, and liberty that have since been argued as universal in application (Graham et al., 2012; Graham et al., 2011; Haidt et al., 2009). The interpersonal interactions and communicative processes of leadership must account for a complexity and diversity of moral orientations. Followers moralize leaders’ behaviors when the leader’s behavior aligns with the moral foundations of the follower, and the moral foundations of followers are diverse (Fehr et al., 2015). Virtue provides a lexicon that can account for the diversity of multiple moral foundations. Virtues have been central to MFT from its inception, but they have not yet been implemented in practice (Graham et al., 2012). By advancing a virtues-based approach to leadership development, we are also advancing an approach that may account for the six foundations identified in MFT and therefore inform a more holistic account of *good* leadership.

When it comes to character and morality, we are not the first to suggest that virtue provides the “goodness” part to *good* leadership. This notion is supported implicitly by those theories of leadership that reference the importance of specific virtues and explicitly by a number of discrete theories of virtuous leadership. Hackett and Wang (2012) identified over 60 virtues referenced within the literatures on mainstream leadership theories, including moral, ethical, spiritual, servant, charismatic, transformational, and visionary leadership. For instance, within the servant leadership literature virtues such as benevolence, dependability, forgiveness, honor, and humility were identified. And the charismatic leadership literature notes virtues such as consistency, creativity, love, and righteousness (Hackett & Wang, 2012).

There are also numerous theories and models of virtuous leadership that make explicit the role of virtue in *good* leadership. For example, Pearce, Waldman, and Csikszentmihalyi’s theoretical model of virtuous leadership (2006); Thun and Kelloway’s virtues-based model of leadership (2011); Lang, Irby, and Brown’s emergent leadership model based on Confucian

virtue (2012); and Wang and Hackett’s conceptualization of virtuous leadership (2015). These virtues-based leadership theories represent rich scholastic efforts that recognize the depth virtue can provide to the understanding of *good* leadership; both in terms of leaders’ moral character and leaders’ impact on their followers and organizations. In addition, extant scholarship highlights the value of virtue to management (Neubert, 2011), executive teams, or the ‘upper echelons’ (Sosik, Gentry, & Chun, 2012); as well as explicating self-leadership (Manz, 2015), the relationship between leader virtue and responsible leadership (Cameron, 2011), and leadership ethics and ethical decision making (e.g. Crossan, Seijts, & Mazutis, 2013; Riggio, Zhu, Reina, & Maroosis, 2010; Wart, 2014; Whetstone, 2001). These studies provide implicit and explicit testimony to the notion that virtue constitutes the ‘goodness’ of leaders and their practice of leadership. However, these studies do not provide a meaningful virtue-based development trajectory to enable leaders to become *good* leaders. In the subsequent sections, we extend beyond claims that virtue plays a role in leadership, to suggest that virtue is fundamental to the very essence of *good* leadership across multiple moral foundations. We then examine the program theory of TVP to determine its merit as a virtues-based leadership development training intervention before discussing implications for research and practice.

THE NEXUS OF VIRTUE AND LEADERSHIP

Reference to the notion of virtue and specific virtu*es* is gaining momentum within positive approaches to leadership and management studies (e.g. Cameron, 2011; Hannah & Avolio, 2011; Kilburg, 2012; Pearce & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Riggio et al., 2010). However, in our review of the literature, the notion of virtue is rarely clarified in depth. There is frequent reference to the word’s Latin root, *virtus*, which means strength or excellence. It is commonly claimed that virtues pertain to moral goodness, compose moral character, have a distinctly

positive human impact; and promote social betterment (Cameron, Bright, & Caza, 2004); but clear definitions are rarely provided. Hackett and Wang (2012, p. 874) define leader virtue as “a character trait that a leader acquires and maintains primarily through learning and continuous practice and is expressed through voluntary actions undertaken in context relevant situations”. This definition takes into consideration important features of virtue, including learnability and context (which we will address in more detail below), but, we are uncomfortable with the attribution of virtue to a singular character *trait*. We suggest equating leader virtue with a character trait contradicts the learnability of virtue, since traits are defined as stable and relatively unchanging (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

Leader virtue, we argue, is more an internal essence, a mechanism that gives rise to myriad leader virtu*es*. In characterizing virtue as a generative mechanism, we do not imply that one particular virtue has primacy, rather we mean to demonstrate the unity of virtue. Before virtue is enacted in a temporally, culturally appropriate way as one of a number of discrete virtu*es*, it is an internal inclination, a mechanism of the moral self.

What is Virtue?

To further clarify the notion of virtue, we draw on the ontology of critical realism (Bhaskar, 2014) and a recent reconceptualization of virtue (Newstead, Macklin, Dawkins, & Martin, 2018). The ontology of critical realism explains three layers of reality: the empirical, the actual, and the real (Bhaskar, 2014; Edwards et al., 2014). The empirical domain consists of our subjective experiences; the things we hear, see, smell, touch, and taste. The actual domain is where events and interactions (that we subjectively experience in the empirical domain) actually occur. Deeper still than the acutal domain, is the domain of the *real.* It is in the real domain that we discover the causal structures and generative mechanisms that give rise to events and interactions (actual domain), that are experienced subjectively (empirical domain) (Bhaskar, 2014; Edwards et al., 2014). As shown in Table 4.1, the ontology of critical realism

illustrates that there is ‘truth,’ but that ‘truth’ is that which gives rise to events and experiences. What we see and think may or may not be ‘true’, but what *gives rise* to what we see and think *is* true – truth is in the potential to have impact; those processes and mechanisms that churn away, often unseen, and give rise to life as we experience it (Bhaskar, 2014; Edwards et al., 2014; Fleetwood, 2005). A good definition contains a *genus* (what it is a part of), and a *differentia*, (what sets it apart from) (Locke, 2012). According to Newstead et al. (2018) the *genus* of virtue is human quality, and the *differentia* of virtue is moral inclination. Virtue gives rise to discrete virtu*es* (hope, compassion, justice, caring, forgiveness, etc) – which are manifest in thought, feeling, and action.

We adopt the definition of virtue as, “the inclination to feel, think, and act in ways that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good” (Newstead et al., 2018). This definition positions virtue in the domain of the real; as an internal locus; a fundamentally good human quality, intent, or inclination (Beadle, Sison, & Fontrodona, 2015; Sison & Ferrero, 2015). Virtue, as a generative mechanism (real domain), gives rise to virtu*ous* behaviors or events (actual domain) which are then experienced and made sense of as specific virtu*es* (empirical domain). In order to demonstrate how virtue provides the *good* to *good* leadership, we will articulate a deep ontology of leadership and align it to this ontology of virtue to illustrate a deep ontology of *good* leadership.

What is Leadership?

As previously discussed, we do not attempt to identify a single unified definition of leadership. Instead, we emphasise the importance of the meaning ascribed to the notion of leadership by those people who use the word – that is, people who experience and enact leadership daily, and in that context the meaning of leadership has remained relatively simple and stable, despite tireless scholarly efforts. Leadership, according to ‘the people’ is simply the process of one (or more) person(s) moving other people to do something (Ciulla, 2003).

We use this notion of leadership and employ the philosophy of critical realism to develop a deep ontology of leadership. On the surface, in the empirical domain, we witness, observe, and measure the processes of a leader getting people to do things. In the actual domain, the events and interactions of leadership take place; a leader persuades, influences, delegates, directs, coerces, inspires, or motivates other people to do something he or she wants them to do. Deeper still, in the real domain, resides the leader’s motivation. The notion of leadership as the process of one person moving other people to do something implies leader motivation or some inner stimulus for action. The process of leadership involves some sort of movement, momentum, or change toward whatever it is the leader and/or his or her team, organization, or society is striving for. That movement begins with leader motivation. The essence of leadership is not stillness, but movement, and movement is generated by motivation. Motivation (real domain) then gives rise to a leader engaging in the events and interactions of leadership (actual domain), which result in empirically observable leadership; people doing something the leader wants (empirical domain).

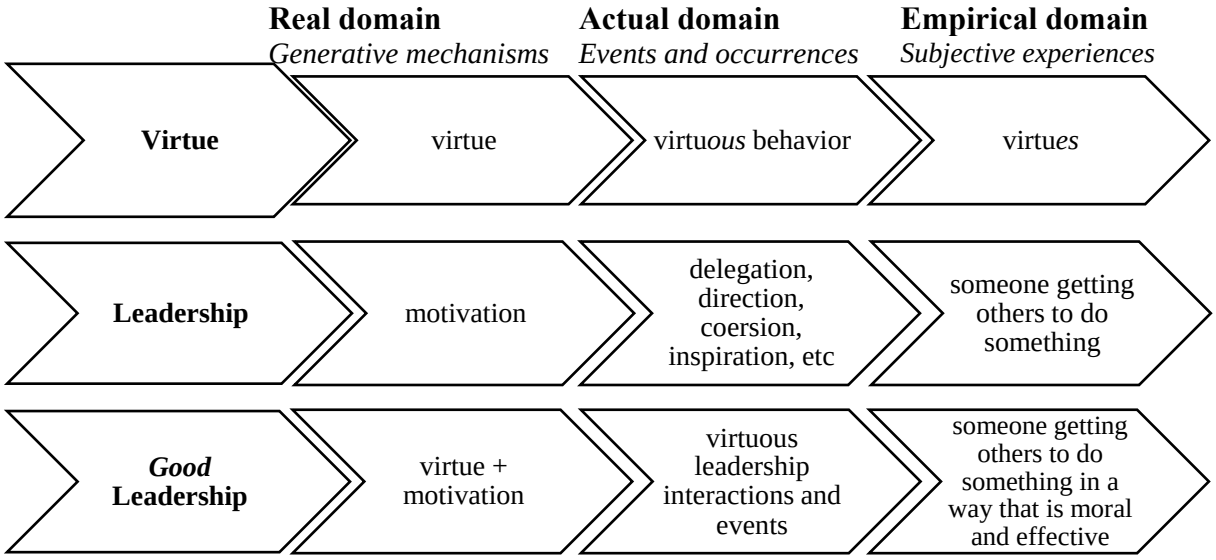
An example helps illustrate this deep ontology of leadership. When a leader is responsible for reaching a sales target, his or her motivation may be to achieve a bonus, promotion, or favourable review. This motivation (real domain), gives rise to the leader engaging in actions and events to encourage, convince, or coerce his or her team to push sales (actual domain). The encouraging or coercing events may then result in the team doing what the leader wants, e.g., pushing sales and reaching targets. The leader has created motion or movement from his or her own motivation; the leader has engaged in events and interactions with others, and it can be observed that he or she has succeeded in getting other people “to do something”.

A Deep Ontology of *Good* Leadership

In Figure 4.1 we illustrate how the deep ontology of virtue intertwines with a deep ontology of leadership to inform a deep ontology of *good* leadership. In the real domain, virtue’s *good inclination* interacts with the motivation of leadership to produce *virtuous motivation.* In the actual domain, virtue’s *virtuous behavioral events* and leadership’s *events and interactions* intertwine to produce *virtuous leadership events and interactions*. Finally, *good* leadership observed in the empirical domain can be seen as both moral and effective. *Good* leadership in the empirical domain occurs when people doing something for a leader are observed to do so in a way that gets the job done (effective) and is uplifting for all (moral).

Figure 4.1

The Deep Ontology of ‘Good’ Leadership



As discussed above, MFT (Graham, Haidt, Koleva, Motyl, Iyer, Wojcik, & Ditto, 2013; Haidt, Graham, Joseph, 2009) and the emerging theory of moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015) suggest that followers will observe and moralize leaders’ behavior according to their own moral orientation. A follower who orients strongly to the fairness/cheating foundation will be more attuned to leader behaviors indicative of such, whereas a follower who resonates more with the loyalty/cheating foundation will be more attuned to behaviors

indicative of it. Positive moralization occurs when a follower makes sense of a leader’s behavior as ‘good’ or upholding of the relevant moral foundation (Fehr et al., 2015). The deep ontology of *good* leadership suggests that leaders can facilitate followers’ positive moralization by modelling moral or virtuous motivation and engaging in virtuous events and interactions.

The previous example of the leader achieving a sales target through the emergence of *good* leadership can be imagined as follows. A leader is asked to reach a sales target. The leader considers his or her intent in reaching the sales target and checks that reaching the sales target fits with his or her moral orientation or *telos*. The leader also ponders what reaching the sales target would mean for his or her team, organization, and customers. The *good* leader is motivated (real domain) to help his or her team develop and achieve, to support the practice of the organization, and to ensure the products end up in the hands of those customers who need them. These motivations give rise to interactions and events (actual domain) in which the leader offers care, support, or helpfulness to the team and encourages the team’s autonomy. These motivations give rise to interactions and events in which the leader shows loyalty to the organization and its purpose and in which he or she demonstrates understanding of and respect for their customers and community. These interactions and events then allow for empirical evidence (empirical domain) of the leader getting the team “to do something” in an uplifting and moral, or, virtuous way.

The philosophy of critical realism is vast and deep, and introducing it to a discussion of leadership runs the risk of muddying the discussion. But, it is valuable to do so in order to uncover the emergence of *good* leadership. In order for leadership to be *good,* virtue must be evident at the point where leadership begins – as an internal generative mechanism or as the leader’s motivation. Virtues must also be evident at the place where leadership is enacted – as virtuous behavioral events and interactions. And finally, virtues must be evident in the realm

in which leadership is experienced and observed. Delving through the deep ontology of *good* leadership allows us to observe the multilayered, multidimensional aspects of leadership in a way that captures a leader’s dual core; his or her morality and effectiveness, or, in other words, his or her character and competence (Hannah & Avolio, 2011).

HOW CAN WE HELP LEADERS *BE* AND *DO GOOD*?

Having made the case that virtue informs the goodness part of *good* leadership, at least in terms of the moral or characterlogoical component, we turn now to the second question this article aims to explore, that is, how we might help leaders *be* and *do good*? If virtue provides the ‘goodness’ to *good* leadership, then a logical next-step is to deepen our understanding of how to harness virtue to develop *good* leaders. Many theories of leadership make mention of virtues such as humility, wisdom, justice, and courage (Hackett & Wang, 2012), but what do we know about *developing* leader humility, wisdom, justice, or courage? Within the positive approaches to organizational scholarship there have been a number of interventions assessed for their efficacy in developing one or two specific virtues, such as loving-kindness, or gratitude, as discussed in Meyers, van Woerkom and Bakker’s (2013) review of positive psychology interventions in organizations. However, to the best of our knowledge, there have been no validated interventions designed to develop virtues more broadly.

In 2012, renowned virtue ethicist, Julia Annas, cited a grassroots training program that was actively and successfully using virtues-language for moral education, known as *The Virtues Project* (TVP). Built on the premise that people are inherently good and that virtues are the most basic elements of that goodness, TVP is composed of five language-based strategies designed to cultivate virtues (Popov & Smith, 2005). TVP’s training program consists of a two day introductory workshop, followed by an optional three day facilitator training. For the past three decades TVP has been largely driven by volunteers and has

achieved inspiring anecdotal outcomes in schools, communities, and organizations in more than 100 countries around the world. TVP resources cite anecdotal evidence about the potent and positive impact of using virtues to resolve conflict and develop character. There are stories of maximum-security prisons where inmates have embraced virtues as a way to awaken their ‘gifts within’ and transform their lives; and stories from inner city schools where TVP strategies have been used to eradicate bullying and other anti-social behavior (Patton, 2010; Popov, 2015).

Despite the positive anecdotal evidence of TVP training, its program theory and five development strategies remain “strikingly undertheorized” (Annas, 2012, p. 676). To address this lack of theory, we explore the coherence of TVP’s program theory in light of Aristotelian virtue ethics and MFT, and we assess its potential as a leadership development program by drawing on current leadership and leadership development literature. We are not suggesting that the authors of TVP consciously drew on the theories we cite, nor are we trying to presuppose their sources, rather we are simply attempting to assess if or how TVP may work as a virtues-based leadership development program. In the sections that follow we will begin to address Annas’s (2012) concern that TVP is undertheorized. We do so by adhering to the critical realist imperative to excavate an intervention’s program theory in order to explicate the implicit assumptions that underpin its design and how and why it is expected to ‘work’ (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). Exploring TVP’s program theory helps develop a sound explanation of how TVP is expected to achieve its intended outcomes and how it might enable leaders to *be* and *do good*.

Our analysis of the program theory of TVP is guided by a robust conceptualization of virtue (Newstead et al., 2018), as well as elements of critical realist evaluation (e.g. Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; Pawson, 2013), and leadership development (e.g. Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Day et al., 2014). Our article makes three contributions. First, to the philosophy of virtue

ethics we theoretically evaluate a program which might enable the translation of its rich philosophy into practical action. Second, to leadership researchers we proffer a virtues-based intervention that might guide attempts to understand how to help practicing leaders *be* and *do good* in a way that accounts for moral plurality. And, thirdly, to the practice of leadership we point to an easily accessible training program; Annas (2012) found TVP on the Web, and so could anyone wishing to pursue virtues-based development.

EXPLORING THE PROGRAM THEORY OF TVP

An intervention’s program theory consists of the unspoken assumptions about how the design and content of the intervention may cause change (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). Our reading of TVP resources identified two key assumptions underpinning its program theory. First, the implicit assumption that a language-based approach is best suited to virtues and character development. Second, the assumption that people are inherently good and that the ‘goodness’ of people is composed of virtues. We will first examine the suitability of a language-based approach to the development of virtue and leadership. We will then scrutinize TPV’s assumption about the nature of character and virtues to assess how it aligns with a robust conceptualization of virtue and how it might be applicable to developing *good* leadership.

TVP ASSUMPTION 1: A LANGUAGE-BASED APPROACH TO DEVELOPING VIRTUES AND LEADERSHIP

In order to ‘get people to do something’ a leader must be engaged in continual processes of communication; everything a leader does is communication (Barge, 2014). By ‘communication’ we mean those infinite and finite processes of sensemaking and creating shared meaning. Communication processes account for much of the dynamic, multilayered, and symbolic nature of the leadership phenomenon (Conger, 1998). It is through processes of communication and language that “situations, organizations, and environments,” such as

leadership, “are talked into existence” (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005, p. 409). Communication has also been identified as central to ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005) and the interactive processes that underpin followers’ moralization of leaders’ behavior (Fehr et al., 2015). Communication and language are central to the enactment of leadership.

Communication is also central to the process of character development. One’s concept of self is created through context and the process of socialization and enculturation (Arjoon, 2000; Epstein, 1973), and so too are personalized moral foundations (Graham et al., 2012). These processes are enabled by the continual and iterative processes of communication, a fundamental component of which is language. As Tsekeris (2015, p. 11) explains, the concept of self is relational and arises through interpersonal communication: “society creates individuals as much as individuals create society”. If it is communication and the process of relating to others that create self-concept and personalized moral foundations, and if virtues represent inherent goodness, and *eudemonia* (the collective excellence towards which we all strive (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1999)); then it is logical to conclude that virtues language would facilitate the moral development of those engaged in the conversation.

Virtues words such as genuineness, humility, and loyalty are often used to describe qualities admired in others (Whetstone, 2003), but we contend that a conscious and deliberate use of a virtues lexicon remains uncommon in leaders’ daily delegating, correcting, rewarding, etc. (Manz, Cameron, Manz, & Marx, 2006). A virtues lexicon may be uncommon, but with practice, a mastery of virtues language is attainable (Vasalou, 2012). Drawing on an Aristotelian perspective, rhetoric can be considered not just persuasive talk, but “the practice by which institutional reality is created” (Holt, 2006, p. 1175). Holt (2006) expounds that the practice of rhetoric, a fundamentally communicative processes rooted in verbal language, is a means by which managers can develop ‘moral characteristics’, or virtues in themselves and others (Holt, 2006, p. 1678). Current scholarship in the field of

ethical leadership further demonstrates the compatibility of language and the development of character and virtues. For example, Zhu, Treviño, and Zheng (2016) explain that it is through ‘daily moral talk’ that leaders influence the moral identity of their followers.

Targeting leaders with interventions is an effective way of achieving organizational change; however, too many additional tasks and demands can result in overburdening leaders and diminishing the effectiveness of an intervention (Nielsen, 2013). The language-based strategies of TVP, on the other hand, represent only slight tweaks to communication practices leaders engage in daily, such as positive recognition of a job well-done, constructive feedback on areas for improvement, and setting clear expectations. These practices are mirrored in the strategies of TVP which include Speaking the Language of Virtues to Acknowledge, Guide, and Correct Behavior and Setting Clear (virtues-based) Boundaries (Popov & Smith, 2005). Leadership is informed by lifelong learning, trigger events, and personal narratives (e.g. Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Day et al., 2014; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005) – in other words, leadership is informed in part by *life*. A language-based approach overlays a leader’s pre-existing processes of living, and leading, without the necessity of additional tasks or activities.

A potential drawback to a language-based approach to character and virtue development is that language, especially verbal language, can be scripted. TVP strategies do, in fact, script ways of using a virtues lexicon. This presents the risk that virtues language might be used in an inauthentic way, more as script than an authentic utterance. It could even open the door to using TVP strategies to manipulate others. Pursuing this risk further could inspire interesting future research. For the purpose of this article, we argue that TVP is a tool, and any tool, regardless of the intent for which it was created, can be misused; a belt can both hold up a pair of trousers and dole out a lashing.

While there may be some risk of misuse we propose that, overall, a language-based approach to leadership and virtues development capitalizes on the communicative nature of leadership, satisfies the constructed nature of self and character, addresses the role of communication in creating and maintaining multiple moral foundations and ethical standards, and overlays pre-existing leadership practices and avoids overburdening leaders with additional tasks. Importantly, the emergent and constructed nature of language and communication also well suits the nature of our critical realist orientation. A critical realist orientation accepts that ‘real’ mechanisms and structures give rise to events that are experienced subjectively, and that experiences and events simultaneously reinforce and recreate those mechanisms and structures which gave rise to them, as is the case with language and how we may expect it to cultivate virtue.

TVP ASSUMPTION 2: VIRTUES ARE BASIC ELEMENTS OF HUMAN CHARACTER

The program theory of TVP is based on an overarching assumption about the nature of human character and virtues. TVP resources claim that *virtues are the basic elements of human character; everyone has all the virtues in potential and developing virtues builds cultures of character* (Popov, 2015; Popov & Smith, 2005). We will explore this assumption by dissecting it into four parts and aligning each to extant theory and evidence. In the sections that follows we, (1) discuss the learnability of virtues; (2) explore the relationship between virtues and character; (3) examine the unity and universality of virtues; and (4) review the concept of virtue as the linchpin between individual and community.

1. Virtues are Learnable

TVP is built on the assumption that virtues can be learned and developed. There would be little point exploring this virtues-based development program and pushing the agenda for virtues-based leadership development, if virtues were not developable.

> Virtues are also considered to be present to some degree at birth, though they can also be acquired through education, self-learning and repetitive practice until their expression becomes habitual. (Hackett & Wang, 2012, p. 870).

While some researchers avoid the debate of whether virtues are traits or states and the resulting problems of changeability or the possibility of developing virtues, the field of Aristotelian virtue ethics clearly positions virtues as learnable and developable (e.g. Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1999; Solomon, 1993). Virtues are both manifest in and developed by action. For example, giving to the poor both demonstrates charity and builds charity (Northouse, 2013). The way to develop virtues is to perform virtuous acts – moral virtues are cultivated through practice and habit (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; Bright, Cameron, & Caza, 2006; Crossan et al., 2013).

Within the socially scientific field of positive inquiry, whether virtue can be developed is addressed, in part, by the distinction between *tonic* and *phasic* virtues. Where *tonic* virtues such as kindness are more consistent or trait-like, they are more difficult to learn and develop, whereas *phasic* virtues which are more state-like, determined more by context, such as courage, are considered easier to learn and develop (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Although effort may be required, virtues are learnable. Aristotle explains that as children we learn basic virtues from our parents and our upbringing, and as we mature into adults and citizens it becomes the role of lawmakers (or leaders) to ‘inculcate’ citizens (or followers) with virtue (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). According to this position, not only are virtues learnable, they are teachable. The learnability and ‘teachability’ of virtue is explained in part by social learning theory, whereby when people identify with a role model they ‘learn’

exhibited behaviors, and adopt them as their own (Bandura, 1977). Social learning theory is also central in explaining how an individual’s moral foundations are developed through enculturation (Graham et al., 2012).

The concept of virtue as a life-long learning process is echoed by the leadership development literature, which proffers that leadership is learned throughout life, with foundational lessons often occurring in childhood (Day et al., 2014; Gottfried, Gottfried, Reichard, Guerin, Oliver, & Riggio, 2011; Guerin, Oliver, Gottfried, Gottfried, Reichard & Riggio, 2011; Murphy & Johnson, 2011). This suggests that lifelong learning of virtue and leadership are inter-connected. The learnability of virtue is particularly important when we consider that a common roadblock to leadership development is a predominant focus on personality – the stable, non-developable traits of leaders (Day et al., 2014).

2. The Relationship between Virtues and Character

An individual’s moral character is built through the habitual practice of virtue and enacting specific virtu*es* such as humanity, temperance, patience, love, and courage (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1999; Peterson & Park, 2006; Sison & Ferrero, 2015). “Character consists of virtues that enhance human flourishing...” (Arjoon, 2008, p. 226). That virtues “…are the bedrock of the human condition” (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 4) is a sentiment that dates back to the work of Aristotle (350BCE/1962), and has been reiterated more recently by preeminent virtue scholars (e.g. Annas, 2012; Crisp & Slote, 1997; MacIntyre, 1985, 1999; Solomon, 1993). These scholars propose that practicing and developing virtues is our human purpose, it is how we strive towards ‘the good life’, and Aristotle’s concept of *eudemonia.*

Reflecting on the deep ontology of virtue presented in Figure 4.1, virtue is what is best about us. Virtue is an internal inclination towards goodness; it is a generative mechanism that gives rise to virtuous behaviors. Virtuous behaviors are then interpreted as discrete

virtu*es* and can be considered the individual building blocks of moral character. Those often repeated, habituated, ‘in character’ ways of being and doing *good*. The concept of leader character and its correlation with virtue(s) has attracted substantial attention within leadership literature (e.g. Mary Crossan, Mazutis, Seijts, & Gandz, 2013; Hackett & Wang, 2012; Hannah & Avolio, 2011; Kilburg, 2012; Morales-Sanchez & Cabello-Medina, 2015; Riggio et al., 2010). Leader character alludes to a leader’s moral and ethical perspective and intentions but is considered distinct from leader personality or values. It is generally accepted that the character of a leader is an ‘indispensable component’ of his or her leadership performance (Hannah & Avolio, 2011, p. 929). Quick and Wright (2011, p. 984) acknowledge that “there is no universal, one best way to lead or one enduring and integrative theory of leadership,” but remain convinced that character plays a significant role in leadership. The centrality of virtue to *good* leadership is as simple as the notion that to be a good leader one needs first to be of good character, and good character is composed of virtues.

3. The Unity and Universality of Virtue

According to TVP, everyone has all virtues in potential, meaning each individual possesses a character composed of virtues that have the potential to be developed. Again, we highlight that this claim finds support in the virtue ethics literature that speaks about the unity of virtue; one cannot have one virtue without other virtues – being of virtue is being of many virtues in balance (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). A facet of Aristotelian virtue ethics is the idea of the ‘golden mean’ which positions virtues at the midpoint between two vices, for example courage is the ‘virtuous mean’ between recklessness and cowardice. Another way of understanding the interplay of multiple virtues is to consider how one virtue, such as courage, is likely to become recklessness when untempered by another virtue, such as temperance or

humility. The unity of virtue is complementary to, but distinct from, the universality of at least *some* virtues.

The most cited catalogue of universal virtues surveyed the ancient traditions of Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Ancient Greek Philosophies, Judeo-Christianity, and Islam to arrive at a list of six universal virtues: courage, justice, humanity, temperance, transcendence, and wisdom (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). According to Peterson and Seligman (2004), these six virtues are essential to the survival of human communities; each addresses a problem that, if not addressed, has the potential to dissolve the community. The essentialness of virtues to human society is a central tenant of virtue ethics and attests to the universality of virtues in human communities (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1999; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2006; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The work of Park et al. (2006) illustrates that even people on opposite sides of entrenched strife see themselves as possessing the same virtues and lacking the same virtues. Even when pitted on opposite sides of century-old battles, foes self-identify with the same virtues, demonstrating both the universality of virtue, and a common humanity.

Extant work argues for the universality of some discrete virtu*es*. However, we maintain that it is the unitary notion of virtue, the human inclination towards good (or Epstein’s (1973) moral character) that is universal, and that this inclination then *gives rise* to discrete virtu*es* some of which may be universal. Even those virtu*es* argued as universal by Peterson and Seligman (2004) or Park et al. (2006) are subject to the varying contextual and cultural factors within which they are enacted. While justice is considered a virtue universally, how justice is enacted varies through cultures and time. Justice in ancient Rome featured crucifixion. While justice still features in modern Rome, crucifixion does not. The virtue of justice is enacted in different ways to suit specific cultural and temporal contexts. A framework developed by Newstead et al. (2018) articulates five factors for determining what

constitutes virtuousness in different contexts. This notion supports the concept of people’s internal inclination, or moral self, being universal as are some virtues, but the expression of virtue, and virtu*es*, varies by context.

The unity of virtue and universality of some virtues means that virtues-based leadership development may be applicable across and inclusive of a wide range of contexts and cultures (Manz, Marx, Neal, & Manz, 2006). While some debate remains regarding which are the essential virtues, a different perspective might be that each individual, or group, is accountable for deciding their own essential virtues. This view is informed by the notion of *telos. Telos* is our *raison d'être,* our “point in living” (Barker, 2002, p. 1100). It is pursuing our *telos* that moves us towards our true purpose, *eudemonic* happiness (Arjoon, 2008; Barker, 2002). In considering which virtues are essential, an individual or organization must consider *telos* because it is *telos* which “holds the key to deciphering the relevant set of virtues an actor must possess” (Heugens, Kaptein, & van Oosterhout, 2008, p. 102). The notion of *telos* helps resolve the debate of which ‘the’ virtues are, in favour of the perspective that each individual, leader, and team will decipher which virtues are the virtues most essential to their unique *telos* and how said virtues might be enacted in culturally and temporally appropriate ways.

4. Virtues: The Linchpin between Individual and Community

The final element of TVP’s foundational premise is that developing virtues creates ‘cultures of character’. The previous section on the universality of virtue highlights the case that humans cannot survive communally without practicing virtue (MacIntyre, 1999; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Virtue may be thought of as the linchpin holding the individual and community together.

Virtues enable both intrapersonal moral development and the development of meaningful interpersonal relationships and communities. Aristotle considered people to be

social beings who are at their best when operating within community (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962, p. xxiv). Virtue ethics holds that the creation of virtuous communities (or organizations) depends on the contribution of members; and an individual’s pursuit of ‘the good life’ depends on membership of a ‘good society’ (community or organization). In other words, the individual good cannot be separated from the common good (MacIntyre, 1999; Solomon, 1993).

There are distinctions between leader and leader*ship* development. Put simply, leader development reflects the development of individual-based human capital, while leader*ship* development is more collective in its focus and addresses complex, multidirectional, relational processes of leadership (Day et al., 2014). The linchpin feature of virtue provides a developmental focus that incorporates both the *intra*personal work of leader development and the *inter*personal work of leadership development. Virtue ethics emphasises moral development and flourishing as expressed both “in private *and* public” (Holt, 2006, p. 1161). Developing individual moral character (virtue) contributes to the common good of the team, organization, or society (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; D. Bright, Winn, & Kanov, 2014). This supports the notion expressed by TVP that individual virtues-development may enable cultures of character (Popov & Smith, 2005).

There are a number of theories and concepts that explain why and how one individual’s virtuousness inspires others’ virtuousness. For example, positive spirals occur when one virtuous act inspires another (Bright et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2004). As Bright et al. (2006, p. 206) explain, the “sense of affective elevation – which is fostered by observing virtuousness – is disseminated throughout an organization by way of a contagion effect”. The heliotropic principle analogizes living things tending to grow towards the light, leaning towards and replicating what is positive, or life-giving. When applied to virtue, the heliotropic effect explains the process of virtuousness inspiring more virtuousness. The

amplifying effect, whereby virtuous actions tend to “repeat and reinforce similar virtuous actions” (Bright et al., 2006, p. 262), also explains how individual virtue inspires virtues in others.

A well-known explanation of this phenomenon is Fredrickson’s broaden and build theory (2001), which explains how individual expression and development of virtue may contribute to cultures of character. Experiencing virtuous behaviors and interactions elicits positive emotions which broaden learning repertoires and builds enduring performance capacity (Fredrickson, 2001). The ‘ripple effect’ of group emotional contagion and its impact on group dynamics (Barsade, 2002) reveals the potential of leaders leading with virtue and, by their so doing, spreading virtuousness throughout their teams and organizations. TVP resources (e.g Popov, 2015; Popov & Smith, 2005) claim that developing virtues develops ‘cultures of character’, a claim that appears well supported by the theories referred to above.

This final aspect of TVP’s program theory (the linchpin feature of virtue) answers Day and Harrison (2007, p. 368) point that while leader and leadership development are distinct, “one without the other is incomplete”. They call for leadership development initiatives that “effectively link the individual, relational, and collective levels-of-analyses, while also taking into account differences in the human capital needs of leaders across organizational levels” (Day & Harrison, 2007, p. 368). In light of the unity and universality and linchpin features of virtue, we suggest virtues-based leadership development would answer this call. Virtues are what connect individuals to the best of their own character, and also what connect individuals to one another. Also, as discussed, virtue is universal and therefore broadly applicable across cultures and different levels of organizational leadership.

Our exploration of the program theory of TVP leads us to suggest that it has merit as a leadership development training program. There are five strategies that compose TVP training and future work may explore these strategies more fully to understand their

theoretical alignment. We simply provide a summary table to illustrate how TVP claims to use language-based strategies to develop virtues (see Table 2) and how these strategies align to the behaviors recommended to encourage followers’ positive moralization of leaders according to MFT (Fehr et al., 2015). This summary explains the strategies’ intra- and inter-personal applicability and how the strategies might be used to develop virtues in self and in others. It also suggests how these strategies might transfer to everyday interactions without adding additional demands or burden.

ALIGNING *THE VIRTUES PROJECT* TO MORAL FOUNDATION THEORY

TVP is composed of five language-based strategies, each of which is grounded in the program theory discussed above. There is strong alignment between our understanding of TVP and the emerging theory of moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015), which builds on MFT to explain how leader behavior is either positively or negatively moralized by followers. Fehr et al. (2015) hypothesise that the process of moralization, in conjunction with a follower’s motivation to maintain moral reputation and moral self-regard, result in the follower’s value-consistent behavior. To demonstrate how MFT relates to the processes of leadership, Fehr et al. (2015) identify those leader behaviors likely to result in followers’ positive moralization. Their recommended behaviors are grounded in the six dimensions of MFT: care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, sanctity/degradation, authority/subversion, and liberty/oppression (Fehr et al., 2015).

We have discussed above how MFT and moralized leadership go beyond the care and justice foundations that have been the focus of conventional ethical leadership theory. By broadening the focus to incorporate six moral foundations, MFT and moralized leadership are better suited to modern contexts of organizational leadership, which are increasingly diverse. The alignment between the strategies of TVP and the behaviors recommended as indicative

of each of the six foundations of MFT, suggest there is potential for TVP to develop moralized (or *good*) leadership. In Table 4.1 we illustrate this alignment.

Table 4.1

Aligning TVP to Moral Foundation Theory

TVP: virtues are the basic elements of human character; everyone has virtues in potential and developing virtues builds cultures of character.

MFT: 6 domains of morality applicable across cultures; leader behaviors based on these moral foundations lead to positive moralization of leaders and result in ethical follower behavior

Strategy	Summary	Moralized leaderhip behaviors[7]	Example of TVP strategy
1. Speak the Language of Virtues	*Using explicit virtues linked to specific situation or outcome to acknowledge and thank, or guide and correct behavior.*	“publicly recognize high performers” • fairness/cheating foundation “Assist followers in developing their skills” • care/harm foundation	**Acknowledge behavior**: “You showed courage by speaking up in the meeting.” **Guide behavior:** “Please stay polite in the meeting.” **Correct behavior:** “Please be respectful by waiting until I have finished what I’m saying.”
2. Recognize Teachable Moments	*Reflecting on challenges or obstacles, considering which virtues may have enabled a better outcome, and identifying which virtues to call on in future.*	“allow followers to determine how they complete assignments” • liberty/oppression foundation	An employee arrives late to a meeting. The teachable moment may be helping him/her identify what virtue would have helped him/her prepare and arrive on time, for example, diligence or self-discipline; and then identifying how drawing on self-discipline might change future outcomes.
3. Set Clear Boundaries	*Using virtues language to create clear boundaries and expectations; and using virtues language to guide and correct behavior when it violates said boundaries.*	“Assign group members to specific tasks/roles Establish clear performance goals”	In our team meetings: • *We engage in* honest *communication* • *We are* respectful *of others when they are speaking* • *We are accountable by being on time and coming prepared*

[7] As recommended by Fehr et al. (2015)

		• authority/subversion foundation	When/if team members violate a boundary they can be guided and corrected using virtues language.
4. Honor Spirit	*Engaging in practices that enhance physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.*	“conduct personal life in a pure manner Maintain spiritual and physical cleanliness” • sanctity/degradation foundation	Time in nature, yoga, prayer, meditation, and mindfulness practices, starting meetings with virtues recognition, or some other spirit/heart acknowledgment.
5. Offer Companioning	*A seven-step listening process whereby one person ‘listens’ another to his or her own best answer.*	“show compassion for followers’ personal problems” • *Moral foundation*: care/harm	Using questions such as, ‘*what has happened*?’ or ‘*what’s the hardest thing right now*?’ followed by receptive silence. Once the speaker has had the chance to ‘empty his cup’ then the listener helps him/her, ‘re-fill’ it by acknowledging and guiding with virtues language (Strategy 1).

IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE

This article has addressed two central questions: What is *good* leadership? and, How can we help practicing leaders *be* and *do good*? Our answer to both these questions is virtue. We argue that virtue informs the goodness part of *good* leadership. Moreover, as a language-based virtue development approach TVP is a promising means of helping practicing leaders *be* and *do good*. Positioning virtue as central to *good* leadership has implications for both scholars and practicing leaders. For scholars, it implies sharpening our focus on virtue as the primary locus of *good* leadership. This could result in a recalibration of the theories and models commonly used to conceptualize leadership and may imply different approaches to empirical investigations of leadership and leadership development. For instance, which

current theories of leadership place leader character and virtue at the centre? How might we assess if, and how training programs such as TVP develop virtue and/or virtues? And how do we ensure that leadership development efforts retain the inherent qualities of virtue, yet satisfy the ever-present demand for the instrumental outcomes such as increased performance or decreased turnover? This article also has implications for MFT by advancing a training program that echoes the behaviors recommended by Fehr et al. (2015) and promises to put into practice the virtues central to MFT (Graham et al., 2012). These represent some of the scholarly questions implied by positioning virtue at the heart of *good* leadership.

Positioning virtue at the heart of *good* leadership also has implications for practicing leaders. Leadership has a dual core. It is not only virtue a leader must concern his or herself with, he or she must also get results; effectiveness does matter (Ciulla, 2014; Hannah & Avolio, 2011). However, as argued earlier, can results be considered *good* if they arise from means that are not? Positioning virtue as primary to *good* leadership, implies that practicing leaders must look inward before they look outward; that they must cultivate their own character, attend to their own virtue development, and lead themselves before they can lead others (Manz, 2015).

Recognizing, encouraging, and directing people are daily activities for leaders, meaning that acknowledging, guiding, and correcting with virtues language (as per TVP Strategy 1) might be something leaders can learn and practice without adding extra tasks to their daily workload. TVP was originally developed as a parenting program and is still used extensively in families and schools (Popov, 2015; Popov & Smith, 2005). This might mean that TVP strategies can become something leaders weave throughout their whole life; something that might become a part of their narrative and lifelong development efforts (Day, 2011; Day & Harrison, 2007), not just as leaders but as people.

Perhaps most importantly, TVP offers a single program for virtues-based leader development and leader*ship* development (Day & Harrison, 2007). If virtue is the heart of leadership, then individual leaders should first be developing their own virtue, their own character. This intrapersonal work might be enabled by using TVP strategies on one’s self. And the same strategies provide a means of interpersonal leader*ship* development, weaving virtues throughout communications and interactions with others that can be built on a plurality of moral foundations. Focusing on virtue development as a means of leadership development has the potential to enable practicing leaders to become better leaders, leaders who *are* and *do* good.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

At this stage, TVP has not yet been empirical evaluated. We also acknowledge that much like any tool, TVP may be uplifting and useful for those leaders who aspire to *be* and *do good*, but there is also the risk that TVP strategies may be misused. We point to the five-factor framework developed by Newstead et al. (2018) for determining what is virtuous in which contexts. This framework provides practicing leaders and scholars a way to determine when and if TVP strategies, or any seemingly virtuous behavior, is in fact of virtue or not. Such a framework may provide a safeguard against the misuse of TVP or any other parading of vice as virtue.

We do not suggest that TVP is a ‘fix-all’ for every leader in every organization and readily admit it is best suited to ethically-motivated leaders. Nevertheless, unpacking the foundational premise of TVP and looking at its language-based strategies, leads us to conclude that it has potential to help well-intentioned leaders to *be* and *do good*, particularly in regard to its alignment with the emerging theory of moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015). The fact that TVP was not developed as a leadership development training program

may mean that future process evaluations will suggest improvements to better align it with an organizational context. Additionally, TVP has not yet been empirically validated. Why then do we recommend it as a potential intervention to enable leaders to *be* and *do good*? Firstly, because it offers an easy-to-follow and readily accessible training program. And, secondly, because it allows for both the unity of virtue and the *telos* inherent in multiple virtu*es*. Which is a critical point of difference between TVP and other virtues-development interventions, such as gratitude, loving-kindness (Meyers et al., 2013) which do not allow for the unity of virtue, nor the selection of virtues most relevant to individuals’ or an organization’s *telos.*

Finally, while our exploration of TVP’s program theory is detailed, our discussion of its five development strategies is not. A detailed explanation of each strategy would require more space than is available within this article. Introducing TVP into our scholarly conversations implies a need for future theoretical work and empirical investigation which might more closely examine the five strategies of TVP and if or how they align to extant theory and evidence. Or, what findings might a narrative review of existing anecdotal evidence from TVP projects produce? How should TVP content and/or delivery be refined to best suit the latest leadership development training and organizational intervention literature? How might TVP be aligned to or useful in creating cultures of virtue within organizations? And, of course, what might we learn from a rigorous longitudinal exploration of the process and outcomes of leader TVP training?

CONCLUSION

This article answers two questions central to the study of leadership: What is *good* leadership? and, How do we help practicing leaders to *be* and *do good*? Answering these questions can help us understand the complex moral relationships at the heart of leadership (Ciulla, 2014) in a way that might benefit leaders, followers, their organizations and

communities. In addressing these two questions, we have made three primary contributions. First we position virtue as the locus of *good* leadership. Second we illustrate the alignment between developing virtue and developing leadership, in particular through a language-based approach. And finally, we introduce TVP, provide the first academic exploration of its program theory and advance understanding of how it may work as a program to develop *good* leaders.

Much recent work in moral and ethical leadership (e.g. Fehr et al., 2015; Levine & Boaks, 2014; Wart, 2014; Zhu et al., 2016) proposes that leaders should be well developed in moral domains encompassing qualities such as fairness, integrity, compassion, sincerity, and wisdom. By focusing on the essence of ‘goodness’ necessitated in the activation or enabling of *good* leadership we see virtues-based development as a promising avenue for meaningful leadership development. In particular, the alignment between behaviors recommended as indicative of the foundations of MFT and the five strategies of TVP seem to suggest the potential for TVP to develop moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015). The culmination of our contributions is the identification of a new and refined avenue of future practice and scholarship focused on greater understanding of virtues-based leadership development.

Exploring the foundational premise of TVP led to the discussion of some key features of virtue as articulated within virtue ethics, and to a lesser extent within the field of positive organizational inquiry. We suggest that the features of virtue alluded to in the premise of TVP and explicated in this article speak to the compatibility of virtue and leadership development, and to the potential of TVP as a training program to develop *good* leaders. First, virtue is open to development; individuals can learn, develop, and eventually habituate virtues. Second, virtue development contributes to character development, and a good character is essential to *good* leadership. Third, the unity of virtue and the universality of virtues account for a plurality of moral foundations and provide an inclusive way of speaking

about and developing character and leadership across diverse contexts. Fourth, the linchpin feature of virtue means that the good of the individual is intrinsically linked to the good of the community and that virtues-development provides the opportunity for *intra*personal *leader* development as well as *inter*personal leader*ship* development.

In conclusion, this article has contributed to both the study and practice of leadership by providing a deep ontology of *good* leadership; by positioning virtue as central to the process of leader and leader*ship* development; and by proffering TVP as a language-based intervention and promising training program. Virtue deepens our understanding of what *good* leadership is, and TVP provides an approach which might help practicing leaders *be* and *do good*.

POSTSCRIPT

Chapter 4 undertook a scoping review to address research question 2a, what is *good* leadership? And research question 2b, how can scholars help practicing leaders *be* and d*o good*? I argued that the answer to both these questions is virtue. By building on my refined conceptualization of virtue (Chapter 3) and the deep ontological framework of critical realism I positioned virtue as the locus of *good* leadership and illustrated a deep ontology of *good* leadership. In exploring the program theory of TVP I justified the implicit assumptions therein and highlighted the alignment between TVP and MFT and the related emergent theory of moralized leadership.

In Chapter 5, I build on the content of Chapter 4 to further theorize TVP. I do this by reiterating my justification for a virtue-based approach to leadership development and aligning each of the five strategies of TVP to extant theory. As a scoping review, Chapter 5 draws AVE, POI, socio-psychological theory pertaining to organizational leadership, and in particular on moral foundation theory (MFT) and the related theory of moralized leadership. In Chapter 5, I elaborate the alignment between TVP strategies and the behaviors

recommended as indicative of moralized leadership (based on the foundations of MFT) and articulate theoretical propositions which help explain why and how TVP is expected to develop *good* leaders.

I note that by reiterating my justification for a virtues-based approach to leadership development, Chapter 5 echoes parts of Chapter 4. Were these chapters written as traditional thesis chapters this repetition would have been curtailed; however, to submit Chapter 5 as a standalone journal article it was necessary to provide a rationale for theorizing TVP and that rationale is, in part, the justification of virtues-based approach to leadership development.

CHAPTER 4 REFERENCES

Annas, J. (2012). Being virtuous and doing the right thing. In R. Shafer-Landau (Ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc, (2 ed., Vol. 14).

Aristotle. (350BCE/1962). *Nicomachean Ethics* (M. Ostwald, Trans.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962.

Arjoon, S. (2000). Virtue theory as a dynamic theory of business. *Journal of Business Ethics* (2), 159–178.

Arjoon, S. (2008). Reconciling situational social psychology with virtue ethics. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 10*(3), 221-243. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2370.2007.00216.x

Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 315-338. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.001

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2008). Developmental readiness: Accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(4), 331-347.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, c1977.

Barge, J. K. (2014). Pivotal leadership and the art of conversation. *Leadership (17427150), 10*(1), 56.

Barker, R. A. (2002). An examination of organizational ethics. *Human Relations, 55*(9), 1097-1116.

Barsade, S. G. (2002). The ripple effect: Emotional contagion and its influence on group behavior. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 47*(4), 644-675.

Beadle, R., Sison, A. J. G., & Fontrodona, J. (2015). Introduction-virtue and virtuousness: When will the twain ever meet? *Business Ethics-a European Review, 24*, S67-S77. doi: 10.1111/beer.12098

Bhaskar, R. (2014). Foreword. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Bright, D., Winn, B., & Kanov, J. (2014). Reconsidering virtue: Differences of perspective in virtue ethics and the positive social sciences. *Journal of Business Ethics, 119*(4), 445-460. doi: 10.1007/s10551-013-1832-x

Bright, D. S., Cameron, K. S., & Caza, A. (2006). The amplifying and buffering effects of virtuousness in downsized organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics, 64*(3), 249–269.

Brown, M. E., Trevino, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*(2), 117-134.

Cameron, K. (2011). Responsible leadership as virtuous leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics, 98*, 25-35.

Cameron, K. S., Bright, D., & Caza, A. (2004). Exploring the relationships between organizational virtuousness and performance. *The American Behavioral Scientist, 47*(6), 766-790.

Ciulla, J. B. (2004). Ethics and leadership effectiveness. *The nature of leadership*, 302-327.

Ciulla, J. B. (Ed.). (2014). *Ethics, The Heart of Leadership* (3rd ed.). Santa Barbara, California: Praeger.

Ciulla, J. B. (2003). *The Ethics of Leadership*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth/Thomson.

Conger, J. A. (1998). Qualitative research as a cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership. *Leadership Quarterly, 9*, 107-121.

Crisp, R., & Slote, M. (Eds.). (1997). *Introduction to Virtue Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crossan, M., Mazutis, D., Seijts, G., & Gandz, J. (2013). Developing leadership character in business programs. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 12*(2), 285-305. doi: 10.5465/amle.2011.0024A

Crossan, M., Seijts, G., & Mazutis, D. (2013). In search of virtue: The role of virtues, values and character srengths in ethical decision making. *Journal of Business Ethics, 113*, 567–581. doi: 10.1007/s10551-013-1680-8

Day, D. (2011). Integrative perspectives on longitudinal investigations of leader development: From childhood through adulthood. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*, 561-571.

Day, D., Fleenor, J., Atwater, L., Sturm, R., & McKee, R. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 63-82.

Day, D., & Harrison, M. (2007). A multilevel, identity-based approach to leadership development. *Human Resource Management Review, 17*, 360-737.

Edwards, P., O'Mahoney, J., & Vincent, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University press.

Epstein, S. (1973). The self-concept revisited: Or a theory of a theory. *American Psychologist, 28*, 404-414.

Fehr, R., Kai Chi, Y. A. M., & Dang, C. (2015). Moralized leadership: The construction and consequences of ethical leadership perceptions. *Academy of Management Review, 40*(2), 182-209. doi: 10.5465/amr.2013.0358

Fleetwood, S. (2005). Ontology in Organization and Management Studies: A Critical Realist Perspective. *Organization, 12*(2), 197-222.

Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology - The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 218-226. doi: 10.1037/0003-066x.56.3.218

Gardner, W. L., Avolio, B. J., Luthans, F., May, D. R., & Walumbwa, F. (2005). “Can you see the real me?” A self-based model of authentic leader and follower development. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*, 343-372. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.003

Gottfried, A. E., Gottfried, A. W., Reichard, R. J., Guerin, D. W., Oliver, P. H., & Riggio, R. E. (2011). Motivational roots of leadership: A longitudinal study fromchildhood through adulthood. The Leadership Quarterly, 22(3), 510–519.

Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2012). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*.

Graham, J., Iyer, R., Nosek, B. A., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., & Ditto, P. H. (2011). Mapping the moral domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, (2), 366-385.

Guerin, D. W., Oliver, P. H., Gottfried, A. W., Gottfried, A. E., Reichard, R. J., & Riggio, R. E. (2011). Childhood and adolescent antecedents of social skills and leadership potential in adulthood: Temperamental approach/withdrawal and extraversion. The Leadership Quarterly, 22(3), 482–494.

Hackett, R. D., & Wang, G. (2012). Virtues and leadership. An integrating conceptual framework founded in Aristotelian and Confucian perspectives on virtues. *Management Decision, 50*(5), 868-899. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00251741211227564

Haidt, J., Graham, J., & Joseph, C. (2009). Above and below left–right: Ideological narratives and moral foundations. *Psychological Inquiry, 20*(2-3), 110-119.

Hannah, S. T., & Avolio, B. J. (2011). Leader character, ethos, and virtue: Individual and collective considerations. *Leadership Quarterly, 22*(5), 989-994.

Hannah, S. T., & Avolio, B. J. (2011). The locus of leader character. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*, 979-983.

Heugens, P. P. M. A. R., Kaptein, M., & van Oosterhout, J. (2008). Contracts to communities: A processual model of organizational virtue. *Journal of Management Studies, 45*(1), 100-121. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00738.x

Holt, R. (2006). Principals and practice: Rhetoric and the moral character of managers. *Human Relations, 59*(12), 1659-1680.

Kellerman, B. (2012). *The End of Leadership*. Broadway, New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Kilburg, R. R. (2012). *Virtuous leaders: Strategy, character, and influence in the 21st century*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Lang, L., Irby, B. J., & Brown, G. (2012). An emergent leadership model based on Confucian virtues and East Asian leadership practices. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 7*(2), 1-14.

Levine, M., & Boaks, J. (2014). What does ethics have to do with leadership? *Journal of Business Ethics, 124*(2), 225-242. doi: 10.1007/s10551-013-1807-y

Locke, E. A. (2012). Construct validity vs. concept validity. *Human Resource Management Review, 22*(2), 146-148.

Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2007). Emerging positive organizational behavior. *Journal of Management, 33*, 321-349.

MacIntyre, A. (1985). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. London: Duckworth, 1985. 2nd ed.

MacIntyre, A. (1999). *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*. Open Court.

Manz, C., Cameron, K., Manz, K., & Marx, R. (2006). Values and virtues in organizations: An introduction. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 3*(1/2), 1-12.

Manz, C. C. (2015). Taking the self-leadership high road: Smooth surface or potholes ahead? *Academy of Management Perspectives, 29*(1), 132-151. doi: 10.5465/amp.2013.0060

Manz, K. P., Marx, R. D., Neal, J. A., & Manz, C. C. (2006). The language of virtues: Toward an inclusive approach for integrating spirituality in management education. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 3*(1/2), 104-125.

Meyers, M. C., van Woerkom, M., & Bakker, A. B. (2013). The added value of the positive: A literature review of positive psychology interventions in organizations. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 22*(5), 618-632. doi: 10.1080/1359432x.2012.694689

Morales-Sanchez, R., & Cabello-Medina, C. (2015). Integrating character in management: Virtues, character strengths, and competencies. *Business Ethics-a European Review, 24*, S156-S174. doi: 10.1111/beer.12104

Murphy, S. E., & Johnson, S. K. (2011). The benefits of a long-lens approach to leader development: Understanding the seeds of leadership. The Leadership Quarterly, 22(3), 459–470.

Neubert, M. J. (2011). Introduction: The value of virtue to management and organizational theory and practice. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, 28*, 227–230.

Newstead, T., Macklin, R., Dawkins, S., & Martin, A. (2018). What is virtue? Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry. *Academy of Management Perspectives, In-Press*. doi: 10.5465/amp.2016.0162

Nielsen, K. (2013). Review Article: How can we make organizational interventions work? Employees and line managers as actively crafting interventions. *Human Relations, 66*(8), 1029–1050.

Nielsen, K., & Abildgaard, J. S. (2013). Organizational interventions: A research-based framework for the evaluation of both process and effects. *Work and Stress, 27*(3), 278-297. doi: 10.1080/02678373.2013.812358

Nielsen, K., & Miraglia, M. (2017). What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the ‘what works?’ question in organizational intervention research. *Human Relations, 70*(1), 40–62.

Northouse, P. G. (2013). *Leadership: Theory and Practice*: Thousand Oaks: Sage. 6th ed.

Park, N., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2006). Character strengths in fifty-four nations and the fifty US states. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 1*(3), 118-129.

Patton, D. (2010). *Investigating: The Virtues ProjectTM effects in a preschool*. Paper presented at the Positive Psychology and Well-Being Conference, Melbourne.

Pawson, R. (2013). *The Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto*. Thousand Oaks, California and London: Sage Publications.

Pearce, C. L., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2014). Virtuous leadership revisited: the case of Hüsnü Özyeğin of FIBA Holding. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 11*(3), 196-207.

Pearce, C. L., Waldman, D. A., & Csikszentmihaly, M. (2006). Virtuous leadership: A theoretical model and research agenda. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 3*(1/2), 60-77.

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2006). The incubator - Character strengths in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 27*(8), 1149-1154. doi: 10.1002/job.398

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2004.

Popov, L. K. (2015). The Virtues Project. Retrieved June 2015, from http://www.virtuesproject.com/

Popov, L. K., & Smith, K. (2005). *The Virtues Project Educator's Guide: Simple Ways to Create a Culture of Character. Rev ed*. Toronto: Ontario College of Teachers.

Quick, J. C., & Wright, T. A. (2011). Character-based leadership, context and consequences. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*, 984-988.

Riggio, R. E., Zhu, W., Reina, C., & Maroosis, J. A. (2010). Virtue-based measurement of ethical leadership: The Leadership Virtues Questionnaire. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(4), 235-250. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022286

Sison, A. J. G., & Ferrero, I. (2015). How different is neo- Aristotelian virtue from positive organizational virtuousness? *Business Ethics: A European Review, 24*, S78-S98. doi: 10.1111/beer.12099

Solomon, R. C. (1993). *Ethics and Excellence: Cooperation and Integrity in Business*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sosik, J. J., Gentry, W. A., & Chun, J. U. (2012). The value of virtue in the upper echelons: A multisource examination of executive character strengths and performance. *Leadership Quarterly, 23*(3), 367-382. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.08.010

Thun, B., & Kelloway, E. K. (2011). Virtuous leaders: Assessing character strengths in the workplace. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, 28*(3), 270-283. doi: 10.1002/CJAS.216

Tsekeris, C. (2015). Contextualising the self in contemporary social science. *Contemporary Social Science, 10*(1), 1-14.

Vasalou, S. (2012). Educating virtue as a mastery of language. *Journal of Ethics, 16*(1), 67-87. doi: 10.1007/s10892-011-9111-5

Wang, G., & Hackett, R. D. (2015). Conceptualization and measurement of virtuous leadership: Doing well by doing good. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-25.

Wart, M. V. (2014). Contemporary varieties of ethical leadership in organizations. *International Journal of Business Administration, 5*(5), 27-45. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/ijba.v5n5p27

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization Science, 16*(4), 409-421.

Whetstone, J. T. (2001). How virtue fits within business ethics. *Journal of Business Ethics*(2), 101-114.

Whetstone, J. T. (2003). The language of managerial excellence: Virtues as understood and applied. *Journal of Business Ethics*(4), 343-357.

Zhu, W., Treviño, L. K., & Zheng, X. (2016). Ethical leaders and their followers: The transmission of moral identity and moral attentiveness. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 26*(1), 95-115. doi: 10.1017/beq.2016.11

CHAPTER

FIVE

The Virtues Project: An approach to developing ‘good’ leaders.

The material presented in this chapter has been revised and re-submitted to *The Journal of Business Ethics*.

PREFACE

Chapter 4 provided a sharpened focus on the normative question, what is *good* leadership. It positioned virtue as the locus of *good* leadership and justified a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders. In Chapter 4, I also addressed the question of how scholars might help practicing leaders *be* and *do good*, and proffered *The Virtues Project* (TVP) as a means of doing so. In exploring the program theory of TVP in Chapter 4, I highlighted the resonance between TVP and the theory of moralized leadership, which has emerged from moral foundation theory (MFT).

Chapter 5 builds on the conceptual analysis TVP's program theory (Chapter 4) by theorizing the program's five development strategies. It does so by aligning each of the five strategies to extant theory from virtue ethics, social-psychology theories relating to organizational leadership, and the theory of moralized leadership. This work provides the theorizing that TVP previously lacked (Annas, 2012). As noted above, there are elements of repetition between chapters 4 and 5. Were they written as conventional chapters, this repetition would have been minimized; however, as independent journal articles, the repetition is necessary. Chapter 5 culminates in theoretical propositions based on each of the five strategies of TVP which are intended to guide future empirical evaluations of TVP as a leadership development program, and which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

The material presented in Chapter 5 comprises a journal submission that has been revised and re-submitted to *The Journal of Business Ethics.* As this piece was co-authored, the personal pronoun is plural.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of ethical leadership theories (e.g. Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Eisenbeiss, 2012) and theories of leadership which contain a moral or ethical dimension (e.g. Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Fehr, Kai Chi, & Dang, 2015; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008) attest to the importance of considering the ethics of leading. However, a recent review identified over 60 discrete theories of leadership, only four of which were classed as 'ethical/moral' (Dinh et al., 2014). The aim of this article is not to proffer yet another theory of leadership, but rather to employ the rich philosophy of virtue ethics to inform a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders.

According to Ciulla (2004, 2017), in leaders, both immorality (Hitler) and morality (Ghandi) are magnified (Ciulla, 2004; Ciulla, 2017). By providing an account of individual moral development as intertwined with the common good, virtue ethics is well suited to inform the ethics essential to *good* leadership. As a philosophy, virtue ethics offers an aspirational account of how we might live 'the good life' but the tradition has been criticized for lacking any clear directives on how to do so (e.g. Annas, 2012; 2015; Harman, 1999; Louden, 1984). In addressing these critiques, Annas (2012) points to a grassroots training framework, called *The Virtues Project* (TVP), which has been using virtues to actively develop moral character and resolve conflict in multicultural settings for over three decades. Promising as it is, Annas (2012, p. 676) also points out that TVP is "strikingly undertheorized". In this article we advance a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders by exploring and theoretically underpinning TVP as a proposed training program. Our aim is to lay the groundwork for further exploration of how virtues-based development might enable practicing leaders to *be* and *do good*, or to lead ethically.

Aims and Contributions

By advancing a virtue-based approach to leadership development, we make a number of contributions to virtue ethics and to the study of leadership. Virtue ethics is critiqued for its inapplicability to practice; its aspirational principles and ancient wisdom are appealing, but some argue that the philosophy does not provide a guide to ethical action. In addressing this critique, Annas (2012) replies:

> *The Virtues Project* has for some years and in many countries actually been successfully using the virtues to resolve conflicts in schools and intercultural situations, while some philosophers have been deeming from their armchairs that thinking in terms of the virtues is ethnocentric and can't resolve disagreements...on the theoretical level consequentialism is often praised as a practical, problem-solving theory, it has, as far as I know, no similar facts on the ground... (Annas, 2012, p. 676).

TVP may represent an application of virtue ethics in practice, but, as stated above, it is currently insufficiently theorized (Annas, 2012). We propose that it is essential to interrogate the program theory of TVP and to assess its applicability to developing *good* leadership before it is tested in field studies. Theoretical evaluation, such as we conduct in this article, is an essential precursor to field studies (Brousselle & Champagne, 2011). Without a clear understanding of those assumptions underpinning its design and the outcomes it is expected to facilitate, how would we know whether, for whom, or how the training had worked? We theorize TVP by exploring its program theory and aligning its development strategies with the philosophy of virtue ethics as well as extant theory from the socio-psychological fields relevant to organizational leadership, in particular the theory of MFT and the emerging theory of moralized leadership. By theorizing TVP in this way, we contribute to the field of virtue ethics by legitimizing a training program that promises a tangible way of implementing virtue ethics in practice, therefore addressing a key critique of the philosophy.

For its part, the field of leadership boasts abundant theoretical and empirical research, yet the impact on the actual practice of leadership is questionable (Kellerman, 2012).

Compounding this gap between the study and practice of leadership is the fact that much of the extant research is descriptive, attempting to explicate what leadership *is*. Whereas the salient questions are actually normative ones; 'what is *good* leadership?' (Ciulla, 2004), and more specifically, how might we *develop* good leaders? In advancing a virtues-based leadership development approach, we seek to address these normative questions. This article does not add to the countless attempts to define what leadership is; rather we contribute to the field by advancing an approach to developing *good* leaders.

Before introducing TVP, we will first illustrate the alignment between virtue and leadership development in order to justify our proposed virtue-based approach to developing *good* leaders. Our theorizing of TVP will include unpacking the implicit assumptions which inform its program theory, summarising each of its five development strategies, and then aligning each to extant theory. The theory we draw on to inform this work comes from virtue ethics, socio-psychological fields pertaining to organizational leadership, and in particular MFT and the related emergent theory of moralised leadership. For each strategy of TVP we develop theoretical propositions to explain why and how the strategy is expected to develop *good* leaders. Exploring the program theory and developing theoretical propositions based on each of the five strategies provides a robust foundation for future empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program.

JUSTIFYING A VIRTUE-BASED APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Advancing a virtue-based approach to leadership development calls for a justification of the alignment between the phenomena of virtue and leadership. The descriptive question, 'what is leadership?' has proffered myriad definitions over many decades of scholarship. While some worry about this definitional variety, we are comfortable with the idea that the field of leadership "can tolerate a wide range of plants growing in it and that there are not weeds"

(Kalshoven & Taylor, 2018, p. 2). We concur that how the term ‘leadership’ is defined within the academic tradition is less important than how the term is used in practice; ‘the way people in a culture use a word...determines the meaning of a word’ (Ciulla, 2004, p. 305). A description of the leadership phenomenon, as widely understood by the people who use the word, is a process of one or more people moving other people to do something (Ciulla, 2004).

The fundamental argument for a virtues-based approach to leadership development is the relationship between leadership, character, and virtue. Leadership is a human phenomenon (Ciulla, 2004), human leaders possess moral character, and moral character is composed of virtues (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). Virtue is defined as the human inclination to think, feel, and act in ways that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good (Newstead, Macklin, Dawkins, & Martin, 2018). Developing virtue is a means of developing moral character, which in turn informs those practices that account for the processes of leadership. Hence, in this article we use the term ‘moral character’ to refer to the part of a person which inclines towards the ‘good’, the moral self, or the culmination of the virtu*es* a person possesses.

Both leadership and virtue are deeply complex, ancient, lifelong, multifaceted, non-static, relational phenomena. A plethora of work in the fields of both leadership and virtue attests to ancient continued interest both in what it means to lead (and how to lead well), and, what it means to be virtuous (and how to develop virtue). By discussing the lifelong learning and developmental aspects of both leadership and virtue, and by illustrating how both phenomena are contextual and relational, we will illustrate the sagacity of virtues-based leadership development.

Virtue and Leadership as Lifelong Learning

First, the processes of learning virtue and learning leadership begin in early childhood and continue throughout life. We first learn of fairness, love, and courage as children; however,

our practice of these continues to develop throughout life. “As we age it is obvious to us that the conceptions we have now of modesty, generosity and many other virtues are not those we grew up with” (Annas, 2015, p. 5). Similarly, early lessons of leadership are learned in childhood and contribute to how one leads in the workplace but continually evolve (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). We might first learn about leadership by being class leader in kindergarten, leading our classmates from music class to gym class. These early lessons of leadership are important, but our practices of leadership evolve past this initial learning. As manager of a project team, one’s understanding of leadership is far more complex than walking in a linear direction at the head of a single-file. Both virtue and leadership development are lifelong processes.

Both virtue and leadership are taught in early life but remain a continual developmental exercise. The acquisition of virtue is like the acquisition of a practical skill (Annas, 2015; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; Ciulla, 2004). One must first be taught how to be brave, or how to play piano. But, over time and with practice, one outgrows one’s first lessons and initial teachers. With maturity a pianist becomes a master musician complete with her own style. And so it is with virtue. We first learn of virtues such as fairness, love, and courage early in life. Our practice of these and other virtues, however, continues to develop throughout life (Annas, 2015). As adults, we may practice similar virtues as in childhood, but we do so in different ways. Instead of showing fairness by sharing a toy, an adult might show fairness in budget allocations across departments.

We are first taught virtue by our primary care-givers, this is love, this is courage, this is generosity. With time and maturity, we develop beyond initial teachings and refine our own habituated virtuousness; and we act on love, with courage, and generosity in our own ways (Annas, 2012, 2015). Virtue is developmental in that the virtuous life is a life lived in

pursuit of eudemonia, not the *arrival at* eudemonia. One is never the 'perfect virtuous person', nor is one ever the 'perfect leader'.

Leadership as we know it, experience it, and study it, is a human phenomenon, and the reality of our shared human condition is that we are not perfect, rather we are inherently flawed (Ciulla, 2004). And yet, humans have a heliotropic inclination toward what is 'right', toward the collective good, toward virtue (Annas, 2015; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). In its developmental orientation, virtue is very much like leadership. Leadership, too, is learned and can be taught, but *good* leadership needs to develop beyond simple instruction and the leadership lessons learnt early in childhood (Day et al., 2014). *Good* leadership develops in consideration of trigger events and a complexity of life experience (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Day et al., 2014; Day & Harrison, 2007). The ways to become virtuous and a *good* leader are intricately intertwined; it is an inherently developmental exercise of continued learning, refining, and cementing good habits.

Virtue and Leadership as Contextual

According to Aristotle, virtue must be practiced in the right way and at the right time (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). For example, during the Milgram studies, researchers asked participants to administer electric shocks to others; and participants obliged. Participants were guided by the virtue of obedience to researchers. Obedience is a virtue, but in this context it was not the *right* virtue (Ciulla, 2017). A more humane virtue to have practiced in this case would have been compassion towards participants who appeared to be suffering. Virtue, we can see, is contextual. One virtue, such as obedience, is not always the *right* virtue and even the *right* virtue must be practiced in *the right way* (Annas, 2012; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; Ciulla, 2017). To be virtuous, an individual must enact virtue in a way that is contextually appropriate (Newstead et al., 2018).

Similarly, leadership is invariably informed by and informing of context. Leaders play a profound role in the shaping of organizational culture, especially in terms of virtuous or ethical aspects (e.g. Brown et al., 2005; Ciulla, 2014; Whetstone, 2017). And the importance of leaders adapting behavior and style to suit the contextual factors of a given situation is well attested to by theory and evidence in the fields of contingent and situational leadership (e.g. Dinh et al., 2014; Graeff, 1983; Hersey & Blanchard, 2007). What works to move some people to action in some contexts will not always work to move other people to action in other contexts. Much like virtue, leadership must be enacted in the right ways at the right times; it is deeply contextual.

Virtue and Leadership as Relational

The development of both virtue and leadership is relational. Relationship and experience are central to the development of virtue (Weaver, 2017). Moral character is composed of habituated virtues – and those same virtues can be "intentionally and unintentionally taught, changed, or learned from others and the social environment" (Ciulla, 2017, p. 948). For its part, leadership does not occur in a vacuum. For the processes of leadership to occur people must engage in relational processes. The most basic definition of leadership is as a process of one or more people moving other people to do something (Ciulla, 2004); thus, fundamental to the leadership process is the relating of people.

The development of virtue and the development of leadership are deeply intertwined. Both are lifelong projects of a distinctly developmental orientation. Both are also inherently contextual and must be enacted in the right ways at the right times. Finally, leadership and virtue are fundamentally human phenomena and depend on relational processes. The sagacity of virtue-based leadership development is grounded in these intersections and in the notion that the development of virtue and leadership are mutually constructive.

Having discussed a virtue-based approach to leadership development, we now turn to a training program that promises to facilitate such an approach. In the section that follows we explore the implicate assumptions that compose the program theory of TVP and summarise each of its five strategies.

THE PROGRAM THEORY OF TVP

TVP was founded in Canada in the late 1990s by Linda Kalvin-Popov, her husband Dr. Dan Popov, and her brother John Kalvin. Built on the premise that people are inherently good and that virtues are the most basic elements of that goodness, TVP is composed of five language-based strategies designed to cultivate virtues (Popov & Smith, 2005). Initially developed as a tool to aid parents and teachers in the moral education of children, the strategies of TVP have remained basically the same since it was founded. In more recent years it has been applied across a range of contexts including moral education, community groups, conflict resolution, and as a tool for counsellors.

For the last three decades TVP has been driven by volunteers and has achieved outstanding anecdotal outcomes in schools, communities, and organizations in more than 100 countries around the world. TVP resources contain stories of using virtues schools, prisons, families, and organizations. There are stories of maximum security prisons where felons have embraced TVP strategies as a way to awaken their ‘gifts within’ and have begun to help others awaken their own virtues. There are stories of inner city schools where TVP strategies have been used to eradicate bullying and transform anti-social behavior (Popov, 2015). To date, anecdotal evidence of TVP’s successes has not been scrutinised or peer reviewed within the academic tradition. Initial efforts have been made to explore the program theory of TVP (Newstead, Dawkins, Macklin, & Martin, *under review*). Here we extend these efforts by theorizing each of the program’s five strategies.

An intervention's program theory consists of those implicit assumptions about how and why it should work to bring about the desired change (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). Fundamental to the program theory of TVP are two assumptions. First, the assumption that individuals possess a character composed of virtues, and second, that language is the best way to develop virtues. Building on these assumptions, TVP proffers five language-based strategies designed to develop virtues. In the following sections, we first explicate the two implicit assumptions fundamental to TVP by drawing on virtue ethics, socio-psychological theory pertaining to organizational leadership, MFT and the related theory of moralized leadership. Following which, we explain the five strategies of TVP before aligning each to extant theory from the fields aforementioned, with particular attention on the resonance between TVP strategies and the behaviors recommended by moralized leadership as indicative of the foundations of MFT. A theoretical proposition is developed for each of the five TVP strategies. Table 5.1 illustrates the strategies of TVP and indicates how we shall proceed to theorize and explore if or how it might be expected to work as a leadership development program.

Table 5.1

TVP Program theory

All people possess a character composed of virtues in potential; language-based strategies can develop virtues thereby developing the 'goodness' part of people.	
Strategy	**Summary**
1. Speak the Language of Virtues	*Using explicit virtues linked to specific situation or outcome to acknowledge and thank or guide and correct behavior.*

2.	Recognize Teachable Moments	*Reflecting on challenges or obstacles, considering which virtues may have enabled a better outcome, and identifying which virtues to call on in future.*
3.	Set Clear Boundaries	*Using virtues language to create clear boundaries and expectations; and using virtues language to guide and correct behavior when it crosses said boundaries.*
4.	Honor the Spirit	*Engaging in practices that enhance physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.*
5.	Offer Companioning	*A seven-step listening process whereby one person 'listens' another to his or her own best solution.*

Implicit Assumptions of TVP

The program theory of TVP assumes that (1) people possess a character that is composed of virtues in potential, and (2) that virtues are best developed through language. Virtues can be taught and learned, and teaching and learning develops the "goodness part" of people (Popov, 2015; Popov & Smith, 2005). These assumptions, while somewhat naive sounding, resonate with virtue ethics. Virtue ethics articulates our reason for being as the pursuit of developing virtuous character (Annas, 2012, 2015; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1985). As explained by Annas (2012, 2015), we are first taught virtues early in life, and with time and maturity we learn beyond these initial teachings. As with a practical skill, the virtue ethics perspective explains that we develop our virtuous potential throughout life in a continual pursuit of eudemonic happiness.

TVP claims to develop virtue and character via language-based strategies. By its very nature, leadership is a relational process embedded in communication; it is through processes of communication that leaders move people to action. And while multifaceted, a fundamental element of communication is language. An understanding of leadership language is key to understanding if and how leadership might contribute to the living of a good life (Kalshoven

& Taylor, 2018). It is through communication that institutional realities are created; and leaders engaging in moral rhetoric has been identified as one way to develop moral characteristics or virtues (Holt, 2006). The daily communication practices of leaders, including delegating, guiding, providing feedback, and role modelling all provide opportunities for leaders to voice and model virtue.

Moreover, the ways in which leaders foster relationships, model behavior, and engage in discourse can influence virtue development (Weaver, 2017, p. 613); however, "today virtue is literally and figuratively missing from our public vocabulary..." (Malloch, 2017, p. 684). Language is integral to the leadership process and yet virtue appears to be missing from our vocabulary. Malloch's (2017) claim underscores the urgency of incorporating virtue into leaders' dialogues and practices of leadership.

Work in the areas of moral perception and moral judgement help build a case for more informal, interpersonal virtue development – rather than a conventional focus on learning and following ethical rules or processes (Weaver, 2017). We suggest that a language-based approach to virtue development suits this informal, interpersonal approach and is therefore well-suited to developing virtue in organizations. A final argument as to the suitability of a language-based approach is a practical one. Leaders are busy. Instead of commissioning additional tasks to leaders, a language-based approach builds on the constant communication processes leaders are already engaged in. If language is a basis to everything a leader does, then a shift to virtues-language promises to influence everything a leader does.

THE FIVE STRATEGIES OF TVP

The first strategy of TVP is to 'Speak the Language of Virtues'. Speaking the Language of Virtues includes seeing and hearing the virtues implicit in a person's actions, followed by naming and acknowledging the identified virtues. Naming virtues in someone else's behavior

increases that person's capacity to realize that they have that virtue and that they can choose to use that virtue in future (Popov & Smith, 2005). Speaking the Language of Virtues assumes that what we say and how we speak to one another influences who and how we become, and that shaming and name-calling reaffirm negative beliefs, whereas acknowledging virtues builds virtues and therefore moral character or virtue.

TVP's *Educator Guide* (2005) stresses the importance of 'catching them in the act of committing a virtue'. This means looking for instances where individuals are practicing a virtue that does not come easily to them. For instance, when a person usually prone to being scattered focuses effectively on a task, she can be acknowledged, or 'caught' for her diligence; when a person who is usually reserved voices a concern, he can be recognized for his courage or discernment.

Speaking the Language of Virtues includes three parts, and can be used to a) acknowledge behavior, b) guide behavior, and c) correct behaviour. The three parts to Speaking the Language include 1) an acknowledgement or invitation, 2) a specific virtue that the person is being recognized for or invited to practice, and 3) the situation or evidence. For example, if an employee put in extra effort on a project, his leader might offer a virtues acknowledgment by saying, "(1) thank you for (2) the determination (3) you showed in getting that project up and running". If the staff member missed the first deadline on a project, his leader might offer virtues guidance by saying, "(1) you need to be (2) responsible (3) in meeting your deadlines." And, if the employee were to continue missing deadlines, his leader might offer a 'virtues correction' along the lines of, "(1) I need you to show (2) diligence and responsibility and (3) have your part done by the end of the week".

Speaking the Language of Virtues employs specific virtues in providing positive and constructive feedback. Whereas one might say, "Nice work dealing with the difficult customer", someone Speaking the Language of Virtues would say, "nice work remaining

courteous with that difficult customer". Speaking the Language of Virtues calls for the articulation of a specific virtue (courtesy) and a specific situation (dealing with a difficult customer). TVP claims that Speaking the Language of Virtues supports moral development by linking virtues to behaviors; thereby, building the capacity to call on that virtue again when needed. Speaking the Language of Virtues is the first and foundational strategy of TPV; the one upon which the other four strategies are built (Popov & Smith, 2005).

The second strategy of TVP is to Recognize Teachable Moments. Recognizing Teachable Moments represents "an attitude towards life as a process in which each of us is a life-long learner" (Popov & Smith, 2005, p. 30). A major focus of Recognizing Teachable Moments is to 'turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones'. In the face of challenges or obstacles, TVP resources suggest asking, "What virtue do you need?" (Popov & Smith, 2005).

The TVP *Educator Guide* tells of the principal of an alternative school in the USA, who used Teachable Moments to guide the discipline he practiced with his students, many of whom had criminal records. When a student was sent to his office, the principal would ask what had happened and allow the student to tell their story. Then he would point to a list of virtues and ask the student, "What virtues were you forgetting?" or "What virtues would have helped you do the right thing?" Once the student identified one or two virtues, the principal would then ask, "How can you fix this by using that virtue?" (Popov & Smith, 2005, p. 33). By focusing on lessons learned and implicit virtues, Recognizing Teachable Moments provides a way to learn from mistakes in a way that develops virtues and guides future action.

The third strategy of TVP is to Set Clear Boundaries. TVP claims that clear, positive, virtues-based boundaries and restorative justice can create safe environments, and that safe environments allow for flourishing. Setting Clear Boundaries based on "virtues of peace, justice, respect, caring, kindness…" creates "safe havens" (Popov & Smith, 2005, p. 57).

According to TVP, Setting Clear Boundaries creates atmospheres that value virtue as much as achievement, that favour restitution over retribution, and that facilitate the cultivation of character (Popov & Smith, 2005, p. 58).

Setting Clear Boundaries guides behavior by stating virtue-based expectations; for example, a leader might highlight excellence as an aspiration rather than giving a directive to do better work (Popov & Smith, 2005). Clear boundaries, as outlined by TVP, are moderate in number, specific, based on encouraged behavior (rather than prohibited behavior), have relevant, restorative consequences, are consistent and clearly communicated, easily understood, non-negotiable, and clear (Popov & Smith, 2005).

The fourth strategy of TVP is to Honor Spirit. According to TVP, 'spiritual' pertains to, "a sense of meaning and purpose, beliefs and values, mastery of the virtues in our character" (Popov & Smith, 2005, p. 83). Honoring Spirit means making time for reflection, reverence, and appreciation of beauty as a way of enhancing emotional and spiritual wellbeing. Honoring Spirit is about remembering that there is more to life and living than physical needs and extrinsic rewards. Honoring Spirit is connection to self, others, and the greater world. TVP speaks about Honoring Spirit in terms of inspiration, reverence, reflection, integrity, and core beliefs. Recommended activities for Honoring Spirit include nature walks, celebrations and ceremonies, meditation, mindfulness, prayer, reflection, honoring others, reflecting on teachings from elders, and reflecting on one's virtues (Popov & Smith, 2005).

The fifth strategy of TVP is to Offer Companioning. Offering Companioning is a means of meeting the need people have to feel heard. People need to be seen, heard, and taken seriously; telling our stories is how we find meaning and purpose in life events. Companioning is a strategy that is employed when someone has strong positive or negative

emotions, feels confused, or is facing a moral dilemma. The process of Companioning is articulated in the follows seven steps:

1. Open the door: ask "what's happening" or "what's going on for you?"
2. Offer receptive silence.
3. Ask cup emptying questions: "what is the worst thing?" or "what is the hardest part?"
4. Focus on sensory cues.
5. Ask virtues reflection questions: "what would give you the courage to...?" or, "how can you show determination in..." or "what would help you be patient...?"
6. Ask integration question: "has this been helpful?" or "what is clearer to you now?"
7. Give a virtue acknowledgement: "I admire the loyalty you have shown for..." or, "I have really heard your compassion in wanting to..." (Popov & Smith, 2005).

Companioning is based on the belief that "the wisdom needed to resolve a problem, a loss, a disappointment is within us rather than something to be imposed from someone else" (Popov & Smith, 2005, p. 109). This resonates with approaches to counselling and coaching which are based on helping the speaker find his or her own best way forward. Feeling heard often leads to feeling better (Popov & Smith, 2005).

THEORIZING TVP

As discussed above, aligning TVP strategies to extant theory is essential to understanding how and why they might be expected to achieve the outcomes they claim. To theorize the five strategies of TVP we align each to theory and evidence from virtue ethics, socio-psychological theory pertaining to organizational leadership. Particular attention is paid to MFT and the emerging theory of moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015; Graham et al., 2013; Graham et al., 2011). MFT articulates six moral foundations consisting of care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, sanctity/degradation, authority/subversion, and

liberty/oppression. This broad, pluralistic approach is in contrast to the focus of most ethical leadership work which has focused narrowly on the ethics of care and justice (Fehr et al., 2015). Building on MFT, Fehr et al. (2015) advance a theory of moralized leadership which accounts for a plurality of moral foundations and explains how followers will moralize leader behavior that resonates with the follower's own moral orientation towards one or more of the aforementioned foundations.

Based on each of the six foundations of MFT, Fehr et al. (2015) identify representative leader behaviors likely to result in positive follower moralization. In other words, the representative behaviors identified by Fehr et al. (2015), are likely to be deemed 'right' or 'good' by followers. These behaviors, and the positive moralization they prompt, are also likely to result in followers adopting values congruent behaviors. By aligning TVP to the behaviors recommended by Fehr et al. (2015) we demonstrate the potential of TVP to develop moralized, or *good*, leadership.

In the following section, we will provide a theoretical foundation for each of the five strategies of TVP and relate each back MFT and the behaviors recommended by Fehr et al. (2015). The purpose of this is to theorize each strategy and demonstrate how each is likely to result in positive moralization. Incorporating the emerging theory of moralized leadership in this way is a reflection of the holism of TVP strategies to encourage behaviors indicative of each of the six moral foundations. The overarching implication of this link to MFT and moralized leadership is that TVP provides a program that can account for moral plurality more broadly than the conventional care/justice focus of conventional ethical leadership theory, and that TVP may serve as a program to develop moralized leadership. For each strategy we also discuss implications and develop a theoretical proposition to guide future empirical investigation.

Theorizing Strategy 1 – Speak the Language of Virtues

Language is an effective way to develop character because one's concept of self is created through communication with others (Arjoon, 2000, p. 166). Tsekeris (2015, p.11) explains that our concept of self is relational and arises through interpersonal communication; "society creates individuals as much as individuals create society". If it is communication and the processes of relating to others that create self-concept, and if virtues represent inherent goodness, or eudemonia, (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1999), then it follows that virtues language would facilitate the virtue of those engaged in a virtues-based conversation.

There is ample evidence that virtues language, or using virtues explicitly in communication with others, is well suited to the development of virtue and moral character. For instance, the practice of rhetoric, which is not simply persuasion but "the practice by which institutional reality is created" (Holt, 2006, p. 1175) is a way of developing moral characteristics, or virtues, in leaders and their followers (Holt, 2006). Indeed, discourse practices within the workplace influence virtue development and are a prime opportunity to practice virtue (Weaver, 2017, p. 613). The everyday directives of a leader have "the potential to support or erode the virtues of their followers" (Ciulla, 2017, p. 947).

In everyday activities and tasks such as, "answering phones, filling out forms, or ordering food from a server, we are more likely to demonstrate the virtues that we really possess or fail to possess as habitual ways of doing familiar activities" (Ciulla, 2017, p. 947). Engaging in everyday communication processes that employ virtues recognition provides the opportunity to facilitate the building and habituation of virtue. Sometimes it can be hard to know which virtue to practice in a new situation (Ciulla, 2017), which suggests that there might be some merit in leaders using virtues language to guide behavior and navigate a new or challenging situation. Be it through guiding or acknowledging it seems that virtues language is closely correlated with the development of moral character and virtue.

Assisting followers in developing themselves and their skills through Speaking the Language of Virtues, represents leaders' behaviors congruent with the care foundation of MFT. Leader behavior of this kind is likely to result in followers' prosocial behavior (Fehr et al., 2015). Additionally, when leaders recognize high performers it is likely to result in followers' positive moralization based on the foundation of fairness and to encourage followers' prosocial behavior (Fehr et al., 2015).

The implications of leaders Speaking the Language of Virtues could be multiple. By prompting follower positive moralization along the care and fairness moral foundations (Fehr et al., 2015; Graham et al., 2013), it could encourage increased prosocial behavior among followers. Additionally, drawing attention to the virtues implicit in behavior and focusing on identifying which virtues are needed in a given context represent the moral reasoning of a virtuously mature individual (Annas, 2015). It may be unreasonable to expect leaders to demonstrate virtuous maturity or virtuous reasoning; but, the aspirational nature of virtue ethics is grounded in the principle that we are constantly striving towards 'the good life' (Annas, 2015). While it may seem unconventional or uncomfortable at first, virtues language is learnable and using virtues language is inextricably tied to the development of virtue (Vasalou, 2012). Were a leader to practice Speaking the Language of Virtues it might be expected that her mastery of virtues language and her virtuous reasoning would increase. Were a leader to adopt Speaking the Language of Virtues, it might be expected that effects would be felt among followers.

Speaking the Language of Virtues represents a means of providing positive, guiding, and corrective feedback in a way that is tied to virtues and character. Feedback tied to virtues and character, as opposed to general feedback or feedback tied only to task or procedure, may inspire positive affect and resultant broadening of learning repertoires and building of future performance (Fredrickson, 2001). Recognition and acknowledgment of virtues may also

trigger intrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation is associated with positive affect, enhanced creativity, increased persistence, and cognitive flexibility (Grant & Berry, 2011). Learning to Speak the Language of Virtues may take conscious effort, but it is learnable (Vasalou, 2012) and the use of virtues language has been argued to increase the moral reasoning and maturity of leaders (Annas, 2015) as well as to trigger positive affect, intrinsic motivation, and prosocial behavior among followers.

> *Proposition 1: Speaking the Language of Virtues develops leader moral reasoning and increases followers' positive affect, intrinsic motivation, and prosocial behavior.*

Theorizing Strategy 2 – Recognize Teachable Moments

Reframing obstacles or negative experiences into opportunities to learn and grow, as per TVP Strategy 2, Recognize Teachable Moments, echoes the essence of cognitive reframing. Cognitive reframing has been applied within psychological traditions and is well evidenced within the nursing literature as aiding in recovery (Robson & Troutman-Jordan, 2014). Cognitive reframing includes altering negative beliefs and converting negative thinking into positive thinking. Doing so increases perceived personal control, promotes wellbeing, and facilitates positive behavioral change (Robson & Troutman-Jordan, 2014). Shifting focus to the positive with virtues builds the capacity of the individual to call on his or her virtues in the future, an ability which leads to increased wellbeing and happiness (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; Cameron, Quinn, & Dutton, 2003; MacIntyre, 1999). This is a principle that is echoed in the positive approaches to organizational scholarship.

Psychological capital is composed of the measurable construct consisting of hope, optimism, efficacy, and resilience (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Interventions that aim to develop psychological capital leverage learning from hardship by having participants recount challenges and how they overcame them (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, Norman, & Combs, 2006). Such activities are used because the act of reflecting on and distilling learnings from

challenges enhance participants' optimism and efficacy in facing future hardship. Reframing challenges as learning opportunities also echoes efforts within positive organizational scholarship to adopt a positive perspective to challenges in order to grow and learn from them (Cameron & McNaughtan, 2014; Lara, 2012). The clinical psychological process of cognitive reframing and evidence from psychological capital interventions suggest that reframing challenges as opportunities to learn, as per the strategy of Recognizing Teachable Moments, does increase capacity.

Allowing followers to learn from mistakes and determine how to complete their tasks is likely to be moralized by followers based on the liberty foundation. Positive moralization along the liberty foundation is associated with values such as autonomy, empowerment, and independence and is likely to result in pro-individual behaviors among followers. (Fehr et al., 2015).

Other than leaders encouraging followers to act in a way that is autonomous, the implications of Recognizing Teachable Moments are many. For instance, Ciulla's (2017) recent work on morality in the 'miniature' highlights the importance of practicing and habituating virtue through everyday experiences. Leadership research tends to focus on the power, vision and charisma of leaders, but Ciulla (2017) stresses paying attention to how leaders conduct daily tasks and assessing how these tasks increase or diminish virtues. For instance, how does the CEO treat a waiter at lunch? Does the General Manager ask her assistant to tell a caller she is out, when she is not? Reframing daily activities as opportunities to either develop or diminish virtues highlights the thought that "the small things actually do matter" (Ciulla, 2017, p. 942) and that there may be benefit in actively using daily events as opportunities to practice and develop virtues.

If the strategy of Recognizing Teachable Moments equips leaders with the skills to turn obstacles into learning opportunities, further implications may include increased

psychological safety among leaders' teams (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). And a greater focus on learning may also tie into the burgeoning literature on organizational learning (e.g. Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999; March, 1991). The concept of cognitive reframing (Robson & Troutman-Jordan, 2014), the 'developability' of virtue (Annas, 2012; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962), and the importance of learning and habituating virtue in everyday encounters (Ciulla, 2017) combine to suggest that reframing challenges as opportunities to learn virtues will develop virtue and moral character.

> *Proposition 2: Recognizing Teachable Moments fosters morality in the miniature, increased psychological safety and learning, and encourages followers' pro-individual behavior.*

Theorizing Strategy 3 – Set Clear Boundaries

Teleological and deontological approaches to ethics focus on either ends justifying means or the most benefit for the greatest number. However, "…no rule or set of rules by itself ever determines how to respond rightly" (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 93). Rather it is the quest of the virtuous person to continually refine how to live rightly, as guided by virtue 'rules' such as 'be kind' or 'be honest' (Annas, 2015). It is virtues rules, or boundaries, such as these as well as an individual's moral reasoning and maturity that guide right action.

Restorative justice is based on the idea that a crime is a violation of a *person*, not a rule. As such, restitution focuses on restoring the damage done to the victim rather than administering an arbitrary consequence designed to punish the offender. Restorative justice emphasises the importance of an offender coming to understand the harm he or she has done to the victim and taking action to rectify this harm as well as expressing a commitment to avoid harmful behavior in the future. These practices facilitate the repair of relationships and the restoring of trust (Johnstone, 2013). Restorative practices that facilitate renewed trust and understanding often lead to forgiveness and reconciliation (Okimoto & Wenzel, 2014).

By actively involving both victim and offender in the restitution process, restorative justice provides a more satisfactory way to resolve interpersonal conflict at work than conventional third-party resolution (Kidder, 2007). By allowing for individual propriety, restorative justice in the workplace might increase the justice with which members feel they are treated, and by doing so, increase perceived organizational justice (Cropanzano, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007). Theoretical and empirical research on psychological safety provides strong support for the notion that humans need to feel safe in order to speak up, share knowledge, learn, and contribute to ongoing dialogue (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Clear, virtue-based boundaries may foster workplace environments that are safe and enabling of psychological safety and its associated performance benefits (Edmondson & Lei, 2014).

The restorative nature of Setting Clear Boundaries speaks to leader behaviors along the care foundation by indicating compassion and forgiveness. When moralized as such, Setting Clear Boundaries might result in followers' prosocial behavior (Fehr et al., 2015). This strategy also speaks to the moral foundation of authority. Authority entails a leader's behaviors regarding the assignment of followers to tasks and roles, and the establishment of clear goals (Fehr et al., 2015). When leaders behave in this way, it leads to follower behaviors indicated by values of deference, respect, and obedience and contributes to followers' pro-leader behavior. Setting Clear Boundaries can be seen as indicative of behaviors along both the authority and care foundations. And when moralized by followers, Setting Clear Boundaries might lead to follower prosocial or pro-leader behavior. Pairing this with the aspirational nature of 'virtues-rules', Cameron's (2011) example of positive practices, and Edmondson and Lei's (2014) review of psychological safety research both support the notion that Setting Clear Boundaries can create safe environments, and that safe environments allow for increased performance and flourishing. The greatest responsibility of leaders is to create the conditions "under which people can and do flourish" (Ciulla, 2004, p. 326). And the

implications of leaders adopting the strategy of Setting Clear Boundaries may be an increased ability to do just that.

> *Proposition 3: Setting Clear Boundaries based on virtues rules and encouraging restorative practices creates safe environments indicated by trust and forgiveness and conducive to flourishing.*

Theorizing Strategy 4 – Honor Spirit

Our age of infinite pluralism and ever-increasing sensitivities to diversity challenge and may even prohibit the integration of religion into workplaces, except those which are explicitly religious organizations. Religion and spirituality can be distinguished by the fact that religion is institutional and *collective*, whereas spirituality is *individual*. Aspects of spirituality include feelings of interconnectedness, trusting that things will work out, striving to serve humankind, and feeling a part of a bigger picture. An etymological definition of spirituality, or *spirare*, means "to breathe", which suggests that spiritual expression is "the essence of our aliveness" (Manz, Marx, Neal, & Manz, 2006, p. 107). Nevertheless, knowing how to express and celebrate spirituality in an inclusive manner within organizations poses some challenges.

The central themes of connectedness, aliveness, purpose, and good intention make the idea of spirituality appealing and applicable to workplaces and also link it intrinsically to the concepts of virtue ethics in that virtues connect a person to his or her moral character and also to his or her community (Aristotle, 350BCE/1962; MacIntyre, 1985). A language of virtues has been suggested as an inclusive way to discuss and celebrate issues of spirit (Manz et al., 2006). An emerging literature in management education highlights the importance of educating new managers in issues of spirituality as relevant to workplaces and urges virtues as a way of discussing and celebrating spirituality in an inclusive way (Manz et al., 2006).

In order to cultivate flourishing and peak performance, there must be allowance for renewal and honoring of spirit – through whichever practices are appropriate for the

individual, leader, or organization (Loehr & Schwartz, 2001; Spreitzer, Porath, & Gibson, 2012). Research in the field of mindfulness echoes this premise by demonstrating that increased consciousness and mindfulness practices increase performance and wellbeing (Burke, Page, & Cooper, 2015). Expressing and honoring spirituality strengthens groups, builds joyfulness through celebration, is an antidote to depression and sadness, allows new perspectives, levels hierarchy, reduces judgement, and increases the likelihood of more celebration (Johnson, 2005). Spiritualty fosters purpose and connectedness – connecting a person to the work they do and to the people they do it with. It is about people feeling inspired, passionate and engaged, involved, and committed to the people they are doing it with (Manz et al., 2006). And the relationship between virtue development and spiritual expression is mutually reinforcing (Cavanagh & Bandsuch, 2002).

A key component of spirituality at work is that for many people workplaces have replaced other interpersonal groups such as church or extended families as dominant institutions in western societies (Solomon, 1993). As such, it is one's workplace that now provides the opportunity to communally honor spirit. Workplace spirituality can increase commitment to mission, values, and ethical standards; can foster organization earnings and creativity, boost morale, increase productivity, and foster collaboration (Johnson, 2005). In other words, expressing and celebrating spirituality within the workplace can foster connection and purpose that many people may lack elsewhere.

The moral foundation of sanctity is represented when leaders conduct their personal lives in a pure manner and engage in spiritual cleanliness (Fehr et al., 2015). Fehr et al. (2015) suggest that when leaders do so, their behaviors are likely to be moralized by followers and result in pro-organizational follower behaviors congruent with the values of piety and temperance. There is ample evidence supporting the benefits of Honoring Spirit on both an individual and communal level within organizations. Any hesitation to do so based

on the grounds of exclusion or fear of dogmatic connotations can be mitigated by using a language of virtues that offers a universal vocabulary for managers to discuss spirit and spirituality (Manz et al., 2006). As an inclusive lexicon, virtues can facilitate spiritual expression which fosters purpose, connection, and pro-organizational behavior.

> *Proposition 4: Honoring Spirit indicates sanctity and encourages purpose, connection, and pro-organizational behavior.*

Theorizing Strategy 5 – Offer Companioning

The sheer magnitude of helping industries that offer counselling and coaching services attests to the catharsis of being heard. Talking to others about troubles can alleviate stress, strengthen relationships and improve physical and mental health (Bodie, Vickery, Cannava, & Jones, 2015). Active listening, it is generally understood, is an approach to listening that provides unconditional acceptance of and reflection for the speaker's thoughts and feelings. The supportive communication literature makes multiple references to the benefits of active listening. Active listening emerged in the 1950s as a means of making counselling more effective for clients. The ensuing decades have seen frequent reference within both academic and practitioner publications to the benefits of active listening, which include reduced distress, stronger relationships, and improved mental and physical health (Bodie et al., 2015).

There is a wide range of diverse theories and bodies of evidence suggesting the benefit of deep, mindful listening and positive regard. The existence and popularity of healing industries based on listening suggests the potency of being heard. The theory of active listening explains how listening processes can be healing. Telling troubling personal stories to a "witness" helps people to heal and "…understand themselves and shape possible futures from drawing from the rich stores of their pasts" (Brahnam, 2012, p. 54). It is through verbalizing one's story to another that one makes sense of experiences and comes to understand the present. The person-centeredness of unconditional positive regard whereby

the listener allows the speaker to freely express his or her own feelings, reflects TVP's strategy of companioning (Wilkins, 2000), as do the healing effects of storytelling as illustrated by Rosenthal (2003). There are a wide range of theories and bodies of evidence suggesting the benefit of the deep, mindful listening and positive regard.

By prescribing 'receptive silence' and prompting open-ended questions, the strategy of Companioning seems to echo a counselling approach and reflects a process similar to active listening, which suggests that when employed with genuine intent, the strategy may lead to healing or at least a more positive mindset for the speaker. Were a leader to employ the Companioning strategy with skill and good intent, it might be expected to increase perceptions of psychological safety because the speaker would be met with support and receptivity instead of criticism or embarrassment (Edmondson, Kramer, & Cook, 2004). Fehr et al. (2015) suggest that showing compassion leads followers to moralize leader behavior based on the care foundation. This in turn encourages followers' prosocial behavior based on the values of caring, compassion, and kindness (Fehr et al., 2015).

We do not suggest that Companioning would be a panacea, but it does seem to provide a listening technique that might help speakers engage in self-reflection and have their feelings validated. The implications of Offering Companioning as a leadership practice may include creating respectful and safe environments where employees can speak up and where followers engage in prosocial behavior.

> *Proposition 5: Offering Companioning demonstrates caring and can prompt self-reflection, validation, and prosocial behavior.*

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

We advocate virtue-based leadership development, and by theorizing TVP we have advanced it as an approach to do so. It should be noted that TVP predates some of the theory and evidence we cite. We are not suggesting that the authors of TVP consciously drew on the

theories we have, nor are we trying to presuppose their sources. Rather we attempt to assess the relevance and applicability of TVP by theorizing the strategies it proffers with theory relevant to the development of *good* leadership. Table 5.2 summarizes TVP's five strategies and each corresponding theoretical proposition.

Table 5.2

TVP Strategies and Theoretical Propositions

Summary of TVP strategy	**Theoretical Proposition**
1. Speak the Language of Virtues	Proposition 1
Using explicit virtues linked to specific situation or outcome to acknowledge and thank, or guide and correct behavior.	*Speaking the Language of Virtues develops leader moral reasoning and increases followers' positive affect, intrinsic motivation, and prosocial behavior.*
2. Recognize Teachable Moments	Proposition 2
Reflecting on challenges or obstacles, considering which virtues may have enabled a better outcome, and identifying which virtues to call on in future.	*Recognizing Teachable Moments fosters morality in the miniature, increased psychological safety and learning, and encourages followers' pro-individual behavior.*
3. Set Clear Boundaries	Proposition 3
Using virtues language to create clear boundaries and expectations; and using virtues language to guide and correct behavior when it violates said boundaries.	*Setting Clear Boundaries based on virtues rules and encouraging restorative practices creates safe environments indicated by trust and forgiveness and conducive to flourishing.*
4. Honor the Spirit	Proposition 4
Engaging in practices that enhance physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.	*Honoring Spirit indicates sanctity and encourages purpose, connection, and pro-organizational behavior.*
5. Offer Companioning	Proposition 5
A seven-step listening process whereby one person 'listens' another to his or her own best answer.	*Offering Companioning demonstrates caring and can prompt self-reflection, validation, and prosocial behavior.*

By drawing on virtue ethics, socio-psychological theories pertaining to organizational leadership, and MFT and moralized leadership, we have theorized the strategies of TVP. Our theorizing suggests that training leaders in these five strategies might develop virtue among leaders and followers, foster a learning orientation, create the conditions for flourishing, provide a means of inclusive spiritual expression, and instruct leaders in a supportive listening process. Additionally, incorporating theory from the emerging field of moralized leadership indicates that the strategies of TVP may result in followers' prosocial, pro-organizational, pro-leader, and pro-individual behavior (Fehr et al., 2015). But these claims are obtuse and overly optimistic. To understand if or how TVP may actually result in any outcomes resembling the aforementioned, comprehensive field studies are needed. Of primary interest will be testing whether the notion of virtue or virtue development is acceptable to leaders and assessing if and how leaders already use virtue as a leadership language.

Other first steps needed to advance our understanding of virtues-based leadership development would include an exploration of leaders' experience of TVP training and any resulting outcomes, with special attention paid to the propositions articulated in the preceding pages. For instance, does TVP training result in leaders Offering Companioning or listening in ways that provide support and catharsis to followers? Or do leaders practice Speaking the Language of Virtues following TVP training? And if so, does this actually develop leader and follower virtue? Of particular interest would be further exploration of the lexicon of virtue; which virtues words do leaders currently use? Which resonate most with leaders? Which resonate least or are deemed least essential? Early field studies in this area would also benefit from a careful process evaluation of TVP. As noted above, it was not developed for organizational leaders and therefore analysis of the content and process of the training

framework warrants careful evaluation. Implicit in each of these future research avenues is a shift in focus to virtues-based leadership development.

The virtues-based approach we advocate represents a shift away from our debates regarding a single definition of leadership (Kalshoven & Taylor, 2018) and our rampant generation of descriptive leadership theories (Antonakis, 2017). Because "we are not confused about what leaders do, but we would like to know the best way to do it" (Ciulla, 2004, p. 308). Virtue is our human inclination to think, feel, and act in ways that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good (Newstead et al., 2018), and leadership is a human process of one or more people moving other people to do something (Ciulla, 2004). By adopting a virtue-based leadership development perspective and advancing a proposed approach this article makes a number of contributions. First are theoretical implications for understanding how we might enable leaders to *be* and *do good*, and second are the practice implications for leaders who are driven to lead well.

From a theoretical perspective, we have advanced a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders. TVP was recommended as a practical means of employing virtues to resolve conflict and develop character, but it was flagged for its lack of theory (Annas, 2012). We have provided the theory previously lacking by drawing on the philosophy of virtue ethics, the socio-psychological fields relating to leadership and management, MFT and the emerging theory of moralized leadership to demonstrate the theoretical alignment of TVP's five strategies. Theoretically evaluating TVP as we have done is an essential step to take prior testing in the field (Brousselle & Champagne, 2011; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; Pawson, 2013). Our work provides a solid foundation for field studies of if or how TVP develops *good* leadership.

From a practice perspective, we now know there is a readily accessible virtues-based training program that is well aligned to extant theory, and which promises many positive

impacts. When employed with skill and good intent, the implications of leaders adopting TVP strategies could range from leaders enhancing their moral reasoning and increasing positive affect among followers (Strategy 1, Speak the Language of Virtues), to allowing for the expression of workplace spirituality (Strategy 4, Honor Spirit); or fostering improved listening practices (Offer Companioning). Importantly, TVP is easily accessible via the web and leaders wishing to engage with the content or pursue their own virtues-based development are free to do so.

Anecdotal evidence attests to the positive impact TVP has had in moral development and conflict resolution in many countries over many years (Popov, 2015; Popov & Smith, 2005). However, until now its program theory and five development strategies have remained undertheorized (Annas, 2012). Additionally, our scholarly efforts have lacked a focus on holistic approaches to virtue-based leadership development. By theorizing TVP we have advanced it as a leadership development training program that offers the potential to develop *good* leaders and we have explained how and why it is expected to do so. Our efforts reflect the imperative to understand how we scholars can help practicing leaders *be* and *do good,* and to positively impact their followers, organizations, and communities.

POSTSCRIPT

In this chapter I have attempted to further justify a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders and advanced TVP as program to do so. By exploring the program theory of TVP and aligning its five strategies to extant theory from virtue ethics, socio-psychological theory pertaining to organizational leadership, MFT and moralized leadership, I have begun to address Annas's (2012) call to theorize TVP. The propositions articulated in this chapter reflect why and how TVP is expected to achieve outcomes as a leadership development

program. Its conceptual analysis provides a solid foundation upon which empirical work can be undertaken to evaluation if or how TVP facilitates the development of *good* leaders.

The next chapter reports on the findings of my field study. My field study is grounded in the conceptual analysis undertaken in Chapters 3-5, and represents the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program. In it, I outline how critical realist evaluation can inform the study of leadership development and detail my methods. Following this I report on my findings regarding how leaders experience TVP training and what outcomes they achieve as a result. As an initial exploratory study, Chapter 6 does not attempt to prove or disprove the five propositions articulated in Chapter 5. However, my findings do pick up on proposition 1 and 5, as will be discussed in Chapter 6. Chapter 6 culminates in a testable findings model that can guide both future scholarship and practice.

CHAPTER 5 REFERENCES

Annas, J. (2012). Being virtuous and doing the right thing. In R. Shafer-Landau (Ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc, (2 ed., Vol. 14).

Annas, J. (2015). Applying virtue to ethics (Society of Applied Philosophy Annual Lecture 2014). *Journal of Applied Psychology, 32*(1), 1-14.

Antonakis, J. (2017). On doing better science: From thrill of discovery to policy implications. *The Leadership Quarterly, 28*(1), 5-12.

Aristotle. (350BCE/1962). *Nicomachean ethics* (M. Ostwald, Trans.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962.

Arjoon, S. (2000). Virtue theory as a dynamic theory of business. *Journal of Business Ethics*(2), 159–178.

Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 315-338. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.001

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2008). Developmental readiness: Accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(4), 331-347.

Bodie, G. D., Vickery, A. J., Cannava, K., & Jones, S. M. (2015). The role of "active listening" in informal helping conversations: Impact on perceptions of listener helpfulness, sensitivity, and supportiveness and discloser emotional improvement. *Western Journal of Communication, 79*(2), 151-173.

Brahnam, S. (2012). To hear--to say: The mediating presence of the healing witness. *AI & Society, 27*(1), 53-90. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s00146-011-0327-5

Brousselle, A., & Champagne, F. (2011). Program theory evaluation: Logic analysis. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 34*, 69–78.

Brown, M. E., Trevino, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*(2), 117-134.

Burke, R. J., Page, K. M., & Cooper, C. L. (Eds.). (2015). *Flourishing in Life, Work and Careers: Individual Wellbeing and Career Experiences*. Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Cameron, K., & McNaughtan, J. (2014). Positive organizational change. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 50*(4), 445–462.

Cameron, K., Mora, C., Leutscher, T., & Calarco, M. (2011). Effects of positive practices on organizational effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 47*(3), 266–308.

Cameron, K., Quinn, R., & Dutton, J. (2003). *Positive Organizational Scholarship: Foundations of a New Discipline* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Cavanagh, G. F., & Bandsuch, M. R. (2002). Virtue as a benchmark for spirituality in business. *Journal of Business Ethics, 38*(1/2), 109–117.

Ciulla, J. B. (2004). Ethics and leadership effectiveness. *The Nature of Leadership*, 302-327.

Ciulla, J. B. (Ed.). (2014). *Ethics, The Heart of Leadership* (3rd ed.). Santa Barbara, California: Praeger.

Ciulla, J. B. (2004). What is good leadership? *Working Papers - Centre for Public Leadership*, 116-122.

Ciulla, J. B. (2017). Leadership, virtue, and morality in the miniature. In A. J. G. Sison, G. R. Beabout & I. Ferrero (Eds.), *Handbook of Virtue Ethics in Business and Management* (pp. 941-949): Springer, Dordrecht.

Cropanzano, R., Bowen, D. E., & Gilliland, S. W. (2007). The management of organizational justice. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 21*(4), 34-48. doi: 10.5465/AMP.2007.27895338

Crossan, M. M., Lane, H. W., & White, R. E. (1999). An organizational learning framework: From intuition to institution. *Academy of Management Review, 24*(3), 522-537.

Day, D., Fleenor, J., Atwater, L., Sturm, R., & McKee, R. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 63-82.

Day, D., & Harrison, M. (2007). A multilevel, identity-based approach to leadership development. *Human Resource Management Review, 17*, 360-737.

Dinh, J. E., Lord, R. G., Gardner, W. L., Meuser, J. D., Liden, R. C., & Hu, J. (2014). Leadership theory and research in the new millennium: Current theoretical trends and changing perspectives. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*(1), 36-62.

Edmondson, A. C., Kramer, R. M., & Cook, K. S. (2004). Psychological safety, trust, and learning in organizations: A group-level lens. In R. M. K. K. S. Cook (Ed.), *Trust and Distrust in Organizations: Dilemmas and Approaches* (Vol. 12, pp. 239-272). New York, New York: Sage.

Edmondson, A. C., & Lei, Z. K. (2014). Psychological safety: The history, renaissance, and future of an interpersonal construct. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 1*, 23-43. doi: 10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091305

Eisenbeiss, S. A. (2012). Re-thinking ethical leadership: An interdisciplinary integrative approach. *The Leadership Quarterly, 23*(5), 791-808.

Fehr, R., Kai Chi, Y. A. M., & Dang, C. (2015). Moralized leadership: The construction and consequences of ethical leadership perceptions. *Academy of Management Review, 40*(2), 182-209. doi: 10.5465/amr.2013.0358

Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology - The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 218-226. doi: 10.1037/0003-066x.56.3.218

Graeff, C. L. (1983). The situational leadership theory: A critical view. *Academy of Management Review, 8*(2), 285-291.

Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 47*, 55-130.

Graham, J., Iyer, R., Nosek, B. A., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., & Ditto, P. H. (2011). Mapping the moral domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*(2), 366-385.

Grant, A. M., & Berry, J. (2011). The necessity of others is the mother of invention: Intrinsic and prosocial motivations, perspective taking, and creativity. *Academy of Management Journal, 54*(1), 73-96.

Harman, G. (1999). *Moral philosophy meets social psychology: Virtue ethics and the fundamental attribution error*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Aristotelian society.

Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (2007). *Management of Organizational Behavior* (Vol. 9). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice hall.

Holt, R. (2006). Principals and practice: Rhetoric and the moral character of managers. *Human Relations, 59*(12), 1659-1680.

Johnson, C. E. (2005). *Meeting the Ehical Challenges of Leadership: Casting Light or Shadow*. Thousand Oaks, California; London: Sage Publications, 2nd ed.

Johnstone, G. (2013). *Restorative Justice: Ideas, Values, Debates*. Routledge. 2nd ed.

Kalshoven, K., & Taylor, S. (2018). Leadership: Philosophical perspectives and qualitative analysis of ethics—Looking back, looking forward, looking around. *Journal of Business Ethics*. Editors comment. doi: 10.1007/s10551-018-3797-2

Kellerman, B. (2012). *The End of Leadership*. Broadway, New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Kidder, D. L. (2007). Restorative justice: Not "rights", but the right way to heal relationships at work. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 18*(1), 4-22.

Lara, F. J. (2012). The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship. *Management Decision, 50*(3-4), 539-544.

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19*(2), 161-177. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.01.006

Loehr, J., & Schwartz, T. (2001). The making of a corporate athlete. *Harvard Business Review, 79*(1), 120-128.

Louden, R. B. (1984). On some vices of virtue ethics. *American Philosophical Quarterly, 21*(3), 227-236.

Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2007). Emerging positive organizational behavior. *Journal of Management, 33*, 321-349.

MacIntyre, A. (1985). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. London: Duckworth, 1985. 2nd ed.

MacIntyre, A. (1999). *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*. Open Court.

Malloch, T. R. (2017). Teachign virtues to business professionals. In A. J. G. Sison, G. R. Beabout & I. Ferrero (Eds.), *Handbook of Virtue Ethics in Business and Management* (pp. 681-689). Springer, Dordrecht.

Manz, K. P., Marx, R. D., Neal, J. A., & Manz, C. C. (2006). The language of virtues: Toward an inclusive approach for integrating spirituality in management education. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 3*(1/2), 104-125.

March, J. G. (1991). Exploration and exploitation in organizational learning. *Organization Science, 2*(1), 71-87.

Newstead, T., Macklin, R., Dawkins, S., & Martin, A. (2018). What is virtue? Advancing the conceptualization of virtue to inform positive organizational inquiry. *Academy of Management Perspectives, In-Press*. doi: 10.5465/amp.2016.0162

Nielsen, K., & Abildgaard, J. S. (2013). Organizational interventions: A research-based framework for the evaluation of both process and effects. *Work and Stress, 27*(3), 278-297. doi: 10.1080/02678373.2013.812358

Nielsen, K., & Miraglia, M. (2017). What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the 'what works?' question in organizational intervention research. *Human Relations, 70*(1), 40–62.

Okimoto, T. G., & Wenzel, M. (2014). Bridging diverging perspectives and repairing damaged relationships in the aftermath of workplace transgressions. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 24*(3), 443-473. doi: 10.5840/beq201471515

Pawson, R. (2013). *The Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto*. Thousand Oaks, California and London: Sage.

Popov, L. K. (2015). The Virtues Project. Retrieved June 2015, from http://www.virtuesproject.com/

Popov, L. K., & Smith, K. (2005). *The Virtues Project Educator's Guide: Simple ways to Create a Culture of Character. Rev ed*. Toronto: Ontario College of Teachers.

Robson, J. J. P., & Troutman-Jordan, M. (2014). A concept analysis of cognitive reframing. *Journal of Theory Construction & Testing, 18*(2), 55-59.

Rosenthal, G. (2003). The healing effects of storytelling: On the conditions of curative storytelling in the context of research and counseling. *Qualitative Inquiry, 9*(6), 915-933. doi: 10.1177/1077800403254888

Solomon, R. C. (1993). *Ethics and Excellence:Cooperation and Integrity in Business*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spreitzer, G., Porath, C. L., & Gibson, C. B. (2012). Toward human sustainability. How to enable more thriving at work. *Organizational Dynamics, 41*, 155-162. doi: 10.1016/j.orgdyn.2012.01.009

Tsekeris, C. (2015). Contextualising the self in contemporary social science. *Contemporary Social Science, 10*(1), 1-14.

Vasalou, S. (2012). Educating virtue as a mastery of language. *Journal of Ethics, 16*(1), 67-87. doi: 10.1007/s10892-011-9111-5

Weaver, G. R. (2017). Organizations and the development of virtue. In A. J. G. Sison, G. R. Beabout & I. Ferrero (Eds.), *Handbook of Virtue Ethics in Business and Management* (pp. 613-621): Springer, Dordrecht.

Whetstone, J. T. (2017). Developing a virtuous oganizational culture. In A. J. G. Sison, G. R. Beabout & I. Ferrero (Eds.), *Handbook of Virtue Ethics in Business and Management* (pp. 623-633): Springer, Dordrecht.

Wilkins, P. (2000). Unconditional positive regard reconsidered. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 28*(1), 23-36. doi: 10.1080/030698800109592

CHAPTER

SIX

Evaluating *The Virtues Project* as a leadership development program.

The material presented in this chapter is under review with *The Academy of Management Journal*.

PREFACE

In pointing to *The Virtues Project* (TVP) as a practical application of virtue ethics, Julia Annas (2012) added the caveat that in its current form, TVP was undertheorized. By aligning the five strategies of TVP to virtue ethics, socio-psychological theory pertaining to organizational leadership, moral foundation theory (MFT), and the emerging theory of moralized leadership, Chapter 5 provided the theorizing that TVP previously lacked. It justified TVP as a program to develop *good* leaders, and produced a series of theoretical propositions illustrating why and how TVP is expected to achieve outcomes as a leadership development program. The propositions are designed to guide future empirical evaluations of TVP as a leadership development program, and they inform my empirical study reported in Chapter 6.

My empirical study was guided by a critical realist evaluation framework and informed by the conceptual analysis in Chapters 3-5 of this thesis, in particular the propositions developed in Chapter 5. As the first known empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program, my study is distinctly exploratory in nature. As an initial exploratory study (and within the resource and timeframe parameters of a PhD project), I did not seek to prove or disprove the five propositions enumerated in Chapter 5. Rather, I sought to understand the more exploratory questions of how leaders experienced TVP and what outcomes they achieved as a result. That said, through the synthesis of my findings I identified evidence in support of two of the five propositions proffered in Chapter 5, suggesting both the rigor of the propositions and the efficacy of TVP.

Chapter 6 begins with a look at how critical realist evaluation can inform leadership development studies; it then outlines TVP, my study design, procedures, analysis, and findings. Chapter 6 culminates in a testable findings model, with the intent that this model in

conjunction with the propositions in Chapter 5 might guide further evaluations of TVP as a leadership development program.

The material presented in Chapter 6 comprises a journal submission currently under review with the *Australian Journal of Management.* As this piece was co-authored, the personal pronoun is plural.

INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of leadership theory has been dubbed *theorea;* a disease whereby we produce excessive theory without convincing empirical evidence or any tangible impact on leadership practice (Antonakis, 2017). And while the body of empirical leadership research is growing, a gap remains between the study and the practice of leadership, with some suggesting we scholars are failing to have any real influence on organizational leadership (Kellerman, 2012). Critical to bridging this gap is to shift our focus from what leadership *is*, to what *good* leadership is, and in particular, how scholars might facilitate the development of *good* leaders. This study advances understanding of how we might facilitate the development of *good* leaders by conducting the first empirical evaluation of a grassroots virtues-development program called, *The Virtues Project*.

By evaluating *The Virtues Project* (TVP) as virtues-based leadership development program, we acknowledge that virtue can inform the good of *good* leadership at multiple levels: as an internal inclination towards *good*, as *good* interpersonal interactions, and as empirical experiences of *good* means and ends (Newstead, Dawkins, Macklin, & Martin, *under review*). The development strategies of TVP are grounded in two assumptions implicit in its program theory (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). TVP assumes all people possess a character that is composed of virtues in potential, and that a language-based approach is best suited to virtues development (Popov, 2015; Popov & Smith, 2005). While the claim that all people possess a virtuous character is idealistic, the assumption that character is composed of virtues in potential aligns with a virtue ethics approach whereby the purpose of life is to develop the virtues of one's character (Annas, 2012, 2015; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). The assumption that a language-based approach is best suited to virtues development also aligns with a virtue perspective (Manz, Marx, Neal, & Manz, 2006; Vasalou, 2012; Whetstone, 2003).

Until now, TVP has not been empirically evaluated, but it resonates with a virtue ethics approach. TVP has been recommended as a means of translating virtue ethics into practice, thereby addressing a critique of the philosophy as being inapplicable (Annas, 2012; Harman, 1999; Louden, 1984). In addition to addressing the critique of virtue ethics as inapplicable, this study makes a number of contributions to the study and practice of leadership. To leadership scholarship we contribute a refined focus on the importance of *good* leadership, and we take steps to bridge the theory/practice divide by applying the strengths of scholarship to evaluate the efficacy of the practical TVP program in developing *good* practicing leaders. To practicing leaders we point to TVP as a practical and readily available program and provide strong evidence to explain how TVP training might facilitate leadership development.

Previous work has conceptually evaluated TVP by exploring the assumptions implicit in its program theory and aligning its strategies to virtue ethics and socio-psychological theories of leadership, in particular moral foundation theory (Graham, Haidt, Koleva, Motyl, Iyer, Wojcik, & Ditto, 2013; Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009) and the emerging theory of moralized leadership (Fehr, Kai Chi, & Dang, 2015). This work has outlined a number of propositions of how and why TVP is expected to work as a leadership development program, with particular emphasis placed on its potential to develop moralized or *good* leadership (Newstead, Dawkins, Macklin, & Martin, *under review*).

As the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program, this study is distinctly exploratory in nature. Rather than attempting to prove or disprove propositions or hypotheses, our overarching questions were designed to explore how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* leaders. As a first step, the current study attempts to answer, (1) *how do leaders experience TVP training?* And, (2) *what outcomes do they achieve as a result?* To address these questions we conducted a longitudinal comparative

case study informed by qualitative interview data. Nine leaders participated in the training event and became the foci of our nine comparative cases. Our study employed comparative cases as opposed to a single case examination of the TVP phenomenon because we wanted to explore experiences and outcomes of leaders both within the training setting and across their distinct organizational contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Interviews were conducted with each leader at three distinct time points over five months. Interviews were also conducted with leaders' peers, superiors, and subordinates (other-raters) both before and after TVP training. While our study did not undertake a comprehensive assessment of the propositions developed by Newstead et al. (*under review*) we did consider our findings in the light of the propositions and identified evidence in support two of the five enumerated. Our study was informed by a critical realist evaluation approach, which we shall briefly explain before outlining our study design, synthesis, and findings.

HOW CRITICAL REALIST EVALUATION CAN INFORM LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP

The field of leadership and leadership development must evolve beyond static cross-sectional measures (Antonakis, 2017). The field has been too focused on bi-variate correlations (Avolio, Reichardb, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009) and must strive to assess more than just improvements in job satisfaction (Day, 2014). Rather than the conventional, randomized control trials that ask, '*did the program work*?', critical realist evaluation seeks to identify, *what* about a program works *for whom* in *which contexts* and *why*? (Lacouture, Breton, Guichard, & Ridde, 2015; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; Pawson & Manzano-Santaella, 2012). Critical realist evaluation is widely used in health care and policy research (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017), and sometimes employed within organisational studies (Edwards, O'Mahoney, & Vincent, 2014; Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013; Nielsen, Randall, Holten, &

Gonzalez, 2010), but it has been applied only sparingly by a few researchers within leadership research (e.g. Kempster & Iszatt-White, 2013; Kempster & Parry, 2011). By adopting a critical realist evaluation framework, our study taps into the potential of critical realist evaluation to inform more comprehensive and meaningful evaluations of the complex processes of leadership development programs.

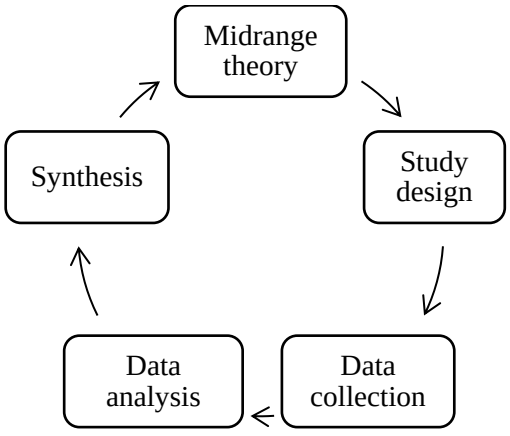
Critical realist evaluation accounts for contextual factors that hinder and facilitate change; it accounts for the intervention itself, including activities and implementation strategies; and it accounts for the mental models of participants, such as their readiness to change and their perceptions or experiences of the intervention itself (Nielsen & Randall, 2013). Critical realist evaluation begins by developing a guiding mid-range theory (Marchal, van Belle, van Olmen, Hoerée, & Kegels, 2012), advances with a synthesis of context-mechanism-outcome configurations (Bhaskar, 2014; Greenhalgh, 2014; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; Nielsen & Randall, 2013), and concludes with a refined mid-range theory. A mid-range theory (MRT) sits somewhere between micro-hypotheses anticipating correlations between specific variables, and macro-theories of unified behavior, change, and organizing (Marchal et al., 2012). Similar to conventional research propositions, MRTs are reflected in the design of realist field studies. But where propositions are dismissed and hypotheses proved or disproved, MRTs are refined through the findings of field studies. MRTs are refined by synthesizing context-mechanism-outcome configurations.

The focus on context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations represents the critical realist stance that it is not an intervention itself that achieves change, but rather it is the triggering of *mechanisms* that make an intervention work. Mechanisms include the "interpretations, considerations, decisions, and behaviors of participants" (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017, p. 46), and the *outcomes* of interventions are the result of these. The triggering of mechanisms is invariably mediated by context. In other words, to understand

outcomes, we must first distil those contextual factors that enable the triggering of the mechanisms which produce outcomes.

Contextual factors that affect organizational interventions are manifest at multiple levels, including individual (values, knowledge), interpersonal (communication, collaboration), institutional (culture, informal roles, regulations), and infrastructural (political support, legal frameworks) (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). By identifying outcomes and distinguishing between the mechanism that achieved them and the contextual factors within which the mechanism was triggered, in other words, by identifying CMO configurations, critical realist evaluation provides much more than '*did the intervention work*?' and can explain, '*what about the intervention worked for whom and in which contexts*'. Once CMO configurations are identified, the initial mid-range theory is refined and can then provide a framework to guide action and further investigation. Figure 6.1 illustrates the cyclical nature of critical realist evaluation and foreshadows how we shall articulate our methods section below.

Figure 6.1
Realist Evaluation Cycle



Critical realist evaluation suits the complex nature of leadership development and adopting a critical realist evaluation framework for this study makes two key contributions. First, by advancing critical realist evaluation as an approach to assessing leadership

development efforts, we answer a call for more comprehensive, robust approaches to studying and understanding leadership development (e.g. Antonakis, 2017; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). And, secondly, employing critical realist evaluation allows us to distil the contextual factors essential in triggering the mechanisms that achieved outcomes from TVP training, and articulate our findings in a way that is transferable and can guide future practice and further research. Next, we explain the development strategies of TVP and our guiding MRT, before outlining study design, data collection and analysis, and the synthesis of our findings which result in a refined MRT.

THE VIRTUES PROJECT AND OUR GUIDING MID-RANGE THEORY

As mentioned above, the program theory of TVP includes the implicit assumptions that all people possess a character composed of virtues in potential, and that a language-based approach is best suited to virtues development (Popov, 2015; Popov & Smith, 2005). These assumptions find conceptual alignment with virtue ethics and leadership development (Newstead, Dawkins, Macklin, & Martin, *under review*). Building on its program theory, TVP offers a two-day introductory workshop that instructs participants in five strategies claimed to develop virtues. The strategies are:

1. Speak the Language of Virtues
2. Recognize Teachable Moments
3. Set Clear Boundaries
4. Honor Spirit
5. Offer Companioning

Previous conceptual analyses have found alignment between each of these strategies and extant theory in the socio-psychological fields pertaining to leadership, and in particular to the emerging theory of moralized leadership which is grounded in moral foundation theory

(MFT) (Newstead, Dawkins, Macklin, & Martin, *under review*). As the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program, we adopted an MRT reflective of TVP's program theory rather than predictive of outcomes that may be achieved through any of the discrete strategies of the program. The MRT that guided our exploratory study was:

> *TVP will help leaders to become better leaders by enabling them to recognize virtues in themselves and others and by providing them with virtues-based strategies to aid their processes of leadership.*

To assess this MRT our study sought to explore how leaders experienced TVP training, and what outcomes they achieved as a result.

STUDY DESIGN

The purpose of our study was to assess whether or how TVP helped leaders become better leaders by enabling them to recognize virtues and providing them with virtues strategies to aid their leadership processes (guiding MRT). We sought to do this by exploring two questions; (1) how did leaders experienced TVP training? and, (2) what outcomes did they achieve as a result? Our study was focused on understanding how a single training event might facilitate similar and/or differing experiences and outcomes for leaders coming from distinctly different organizational contexts. To explore these questions, we employed a longitudinal comparative case method and consisted of qualitative interview data collected from nine participating leaders and their other-raters at three data collection points over the course of five months.

To be understood, leadership must be assessed by more than static cross-sectional surveys (Antonakis, 2017). We would add that to be understood *well* leadership development efforts must be recounted and explained by leaders and their colleagues in a way that accounts for both the evolutionary and complex nature of leadership development. The longitudinal nature of our design allowed us to assess the inherently evolutionary and

continual processes of leadership development (Day et al., 2014; Day & Harrison, 2007), and in-depth interviews with both leaders and their other-raters produced rich qualitative data about to complex and symbolic nature of leadership development (Conger, 1998).

Comparative case study methods are valuable in exploring new phenomena, such as virtues-based leadership development; they are suited to longitudinal studies (Eisenhardt, 1989); and can inform emergent mid-range theories (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). For this study, we conceptualized individual leaders as the foci of our comparative cases; our nine participating leaders became nine comparative cases. We did this to account for the unique organizational contexts each leader came from. It was our aim to understand both the similarities and differences that might emerge for leaders across their different organizational contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Leader participants self-selected for the study by responding to an Expression of Interest (EOI) document the research team circulated among our professional networks. Twenty-seven leaders from 24 organizations in a rural region of Australia expressed interest in participating in Virtues at Work. Inclusion criteria required participants to be aged 18 years or older, be currently supervising at least three direct reports, and to be available to attend the two-day TVP training workshop with their employer's consent. Based on these criteria, only nine leaders from seven different organisations met the participation requirements of the study. Each of the nine leader participants became the focus of their respective case, with nine cases representing a sufficient number to allow for rich comparison (Eisenhardt, 1989; Kessler & Bach, 2014; Yin, 2003). Each leader case consisted of the leader's interview data and data from interviews with his or her respective other-raters.

All of the nine participating leaders lived and worked in the same rural region of Australia, had some level of post-secondary education, and were employed by an organization that supported their participation in a leadership development study. These

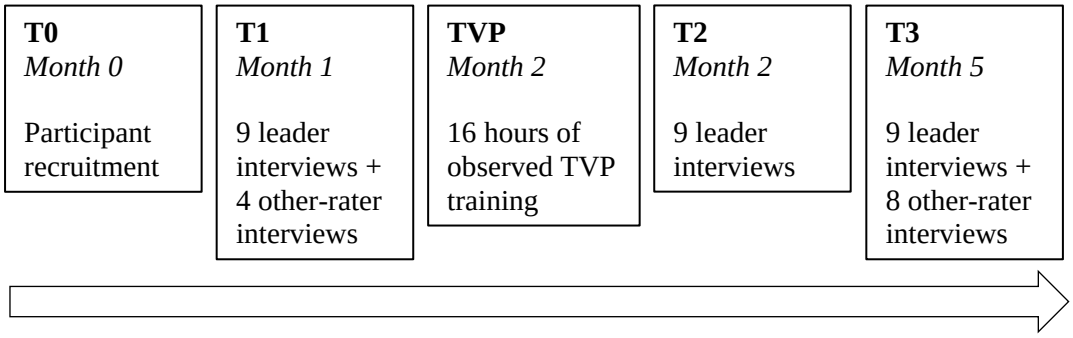
represent some important contextual similarities; however, there were also contextual variabilities. Participating leaders came from industries and sectors ranging from emergency service to hospitality; some had been working within the same organization for over 30 years, some for less than one year. Some were top managers with ultimate oversight of their organizations, some were business owner-operators, and some were middle managers in state run agencies.

Each participating leader acted as gatekeeper to 'other-raters' (peers, superiors, and subordinates) within their respective organizations by forwarding an invitation to provide interviews before TVP training and again four months following TVP training. Each leader had at least one other-rater provide interview, and three leaders had two. Other-raters were valuable key-informants who provided rich data with which to triangulate leaders' interview data.

Procedures

As part of their participation in the study, each leader provided three interviews, as illustrated in Figure 6.2. After expressing interest and completing the recruitment process (which consisted of leader and organizational consent), leaders were invited to provide their first of three interviews. T1 interviews were conducted in the month before TVP training; T2 interviews were conducted the week following TVP training; and T3 interviews were conducted four months after TVP training. Other-raters provided interviews at T1 and T3, as illustrated in Figure 6.2. Interviews were conducted either in person or over the phone, depending on the preferences of the interviewee. Each interview was conducted by the first author, lasted 35-50 minutes, and was audio recorded.

Figure 6.2
Study Procedures



In addition to T1, T2, and T3 interviews, the first author also observed the two days of TVP training leaders participated in. About an intervention he evaluated, qualitative methodologist Michael Quinn Patton wrote, "...we would never have understood the program without personally experiencing it..." adding, "had we designed the follow up study without having participated in the program, we would have completely missed the mark and asked inappropriate questions" (Patton, 2015, p. 331). Similarly, in this study, it was the first author's observations of the TVP training intervention that guided leader and other-rater interviews that followed. Having a member of the research team attend the training was imperative to understanding the intervention activities, as critical realist evaluation mandates (Nielsen & Randall, 2013). The two days of training was facilitated by a TVP Master Facilitator and adhered to an adult learning framework including direct instruction, role-play, activities, sharing, and discussion.

T1 Interviews.

Leader interviews at T1 used a standardized open-ended structure (Patton, 2015) to ensure all cases started with a similar 'baseline'. Each leader was asked about the nature of his or her role and organization of employment, current understanding of virtues, and what he or she expected to get out of the study. Three key elements in determining the leaders' baseline were (1) gauging their understanding of virtues prior to the training, (2) assessing leader

developmental readiness, and (3) exploring if or how leaders were engaging in communication processes similar to those they would be trained in.

To assess baseline understandings of the concept of virtue(s), each leader was asked at T1, "*What does the term 'virtues' mean to you*?" To assess leaders' developmental readiness, we developed standardized questions based on dimensions of developmental readiness including developmental efficacy, learning goal orientation, leader-complexity, and clarity of self-concept as identified by Avolio and Hananh's (2008). For example, to assess developmental efficacy, each leader was asked, "*In general, when you undertake a new course or development activity, how confident are you that you'll be able to acquire the skills taught?"* To assess if or how leaders were engaging in communication processes resembling TVP strategies they would be trained in, we developed standardized interview questions based on each of TVP's five strategies. For example, to assess how leaders engaged in communication processes that resembled Strategy 1, Speaking the Language of Virtues to offer acknowledgment, we asked, "*When a member of your team excels at something or shows a high level of effort, what do you do?"*

Other-rater interviews at T1 also employed a standardized open-ended structure (Patton, 2015). These interviews were designed to triangulate data collected from leaders that pertained to perceptions of psychological safety and a strengths-focus within the team, which resemble organizational level components of developmental readiness. For example, other-raters were asked, "*In your workplace, how safe is it for people to be themselves, make mistakes, and be vulnerable?"* Other-raters interviews at T1 were also used to triangulate if or how leaders engaged in communication processes resembling TVP strategies prior to the training. For example, other-raters were asked, "*When you or a team member puts a lot of effort into something, what does your leader do?"*

T2 Interviews.

Interviews at T2 employed an interview guide (Patton, 2015) and the primary intent was to answer the question, 'how do leaders experience TVP training?' Having observed the training, the first author was better equipped to understand and drill down on leaders' experiences in T2 interviews. Specifically, leaders were asked how they had found TVP training; and what they found best and worst about the training. A secondary intent of T2 interviews was to assess if or how leaders intended to implement what they had learned during the training into their leadership roles. To this end, leaders were asked what parts were applicable to their leadership roles and what their intentions were to implement the training. A final aspect of T2 interviews was to explore how leaders' understanding of virtues had changed.

T3 Interviews.

Interviews at T3 employed an interview guide (Patton, 2015). The primary focus of T3 interviews was to explore if and how leaders had incorporated TVP training into their leadership practices. Leaders were asked what, if anything, they had implemented from the training; how they were gauging responses among other-raters; if there was anything they had attempted which had not been received well; and what their intention was in regards to continued use of TVP training and strategies.

Other-rater interviews at T3 provided triangulation to leader interviews. Other-raters were asked if and what changes they had noticed in their leaders over the previous four months. In multiple instances, other-raters corroborated changes their respective leader had reported. The changes noted by leaders that were corroborated by their respective other-raters provided strong evidence of outcomes resulting from the leaders' TVP training.

DATA ANALYSIS[8]

We organized and analyzed all leader and other-rater interview transcripts with QSR International's NVivo software. Two distinct phases of analysis were conducted. Phase 1 consisted of inductive within-case analysis. Phase 2 consisted of cross-case analysis, which analysed all leader and other-rater data to synthesise findings regarding how leaders had experienced TVP training, and what outcomes they had achieved as a result.

Phase 1 – Within-Case Analysis

Conducting within-case analysis enabled "familiarity with the data" and "preliminary theory generation" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 533). Independent NVivo projects were created for each of the nine leader cases and all data pertaining to that leader (leader and relevant other-rater interview transcripts) were imported into his or her project. The general inductive method (Thomas, 2006) was used to assign data to emergent themes, which were then re-coded and arranged into superordinate and subsidiary relationships. We describe our analysis procedures and how we used NVivo in consideration of the best practice outlined by Paulus, Woods, Atkins, & Macklin (2017). Data pertaining to a theme were held in a 'node'. Each node was given inclusion and exclusion criteria to depict which data fit in the node and which did not. NVivo software visualized each node, the coding rule for each node, and how many references or chunks of data had been assigned each node.

After all data pertaining to each within-case was analyzed and coded and assigned to nodes, we used word frequency searches, text searches, coding stripes, and inter-coder comparison reports were conducted to ensure the reliability of our coding. We used word frequency searches to depict which words were used most frequently in interviews in order to assess how the frequency of some words aligned to the nodes. For instance, we would expect

[8]My discussion of the details of my analysis in NVivo is tempered in this chapter in accordance with the stylistic convention of the journal with which this chapter is under review. Further detail of my analysis procedures can be found in Chapter 2 and Appendix III.

to have nodes which accounted for those words found to be most frequent. Text searches were used to search for those words which appeared frequent and yet could have multiple meanings to ensure they had been coded appropriately. As a reliability check, we had an independent researcher who was experienced in using NVivo code a section of our data by following our coding rules (inclusion and exclusion criteria for each node). The comparison report resulted in 97.54 per cent agreement, attesting to the reliability of our analysis.

Phase 1 culminated in a within-case analysis report for each leader. Within-case reports included: an assessment of the leader's developmental readiness and how the leader employed practices resonant of TVP strategies prior to TVP training; the first author's observations of the leader during the two day TVP training workshop; the leader's reaction to and intent regarding implementing the training as articulated at T2; and, overall results and outcomes the leader achieved through participation in TVP training. As an accuracy, check (Owens & Hekman, 2012), within-case reports were sent to each respective leader. Each leader responded to their report positively, and none had any recommended changes, further attesting to the validity of the within-case analysis.

Phase 2 – Cross-Case Analysis

Cross-case analysis consisted of re-coding all leader and other-rater data into a single NVivo project. The process of re-analysing all data presented the opportunity for 'framebreaking' by juxtaposing data from different cases (Eisenhardt, 1989). Cross-case coding procedures replicated those used for within-case analysis, including an initial inductive coding whereby we assigned data to nodes bound by inclusion and exclusion criteria. We also used the same word frequency and text search functions of NVivo to ensure the reliability of our coding. From there, we employed a recursive cycle whereby data were coded to superordinate themes and then re-coded into subordinate themes and back again until coherent and common outcomes were identified. The underlying logic of comparing cases is replication, which

means treating a series of cases like a series of experiments. “In replication logic, cases which confirm emergent relationships enhance confidence in the validity of the relationships...” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 542). Pairing, grouping, and comparing individual cases in this way allowed us to “identify patterns and reveal their underlying causation” (Kessler & Bach, 2014, p. 176). Because each leader was conceptualized as his- or her-own ‘case’, the findings represented outcomes unconfined to a single organization or context.

Comparing cases for underlying causation allowed us to locate wider patterns in leaders’ experiences and mechanisms engaged as a result of the training (Kessler & Bach, 2014). The recursive cycling though data and extant theory kept us ‘honest’ and allowed us to ‘pattern-match’ between each case (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). It was the cross-case analysis that allowed us to “look beyond initial impressions: and to assess the data from different angles and through different lenses” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 533). Cross-case analysis made it possible to identify the commonalities among leaders’ experiences, as well as those contextual factors that had enabled the mechanisms that achieved outcomes following TVP training.

SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

This section explains how synthesising our data by enfolding theory and literature into identified themes (Eisenhardt, 1989) enabled us to answer (1) *how do leaders experienced TVP training?* And, (2) *what outcomes they achieved as a result?* The five propositions articulated by Newstead et al. (*under review*) were not explicitly tested; however, we did consider them in the synthesis of our findings and identified evidence supporting at two, as will be discussed below.

Critical realist evaluation directed our analysis towards discerning those contextual factors that fostered the triggering of mechanism that influenced leaders' experiences of and outcomes following TVP training. Additionally, our synthesis was guided by our MRT:

> *TVP will help leaders to become better leaders by enabling them to recognize virtues in themselves and others and by providing them with virtues-based strategies to aid their processes of leadership.*

Findings reveal that leaders experienced TVP as a trigger-event, which resulted in new understandings of what virtues are, how to recognize virtues in behavior, and how virtues can be incorporated into leaders' communication practices.

How Leaders Experienced TVP Training

The TVP training days adhered to an adult education framework, but participants were asked to engage in some unconventional activities, including 'happy dances', using 'talking-sticks', and playing 'pass the virtue' where one would name a virtue and then toss the ball to another who would have to name another virtue. Leaders were also asked to share personal leadership challenges with the group and reflect on which virtues might help resolve the issues. To support these activities, participants were given a list of 100 virtues and all agreed to boundaries of trust and confidentiality. Over the duration of the two days, each of the nine participants lowered their guard and opened up to the group. In T2 interviews each leader commented on the training group, noting how quickly they came to trust one another, and how rich it had been to share experience and 'swap stories' with other leaders of a similar ilk.

Within the leadership development literature, it is generally recognized that there are some occurrences in one's life that will stand-out from the rest; occurrences that will have a pronounced effect on the direction and speed of one's ability, motivation, and approach to leading (e.g. Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Puente, Crous, & Venter, 2007). In other words, certain events trigger cognitive redefinition (Isabella, 1990) that can spark shifts to affect and behavior. Triggers can be conceived as positive or negative events

which precipitate a 'wake-up-call' (Puente et al., 2007) or an 'a-ha!' moment (Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005). Any event that precipitates this cognitive, affective, and behavioral shift can be considered a trigger event, including intervention programs such as TVP training.

Leaders' experience of TVP is well explained as a trigger event. The training represented their being two days away from their usual lives and roles, and provided an opportunity for reflection, sharing, and learning, which one leader referred to as 'a rare luxury'. This 'break' from the norm sparked shifts in affect, cognition, and behavior among participating leaders, as per a trigger event (Cooper et al., 2005; Isabella, 1990; Puente et al., 2007). "*I wasn't really awake*," reported Leader 5. "*My understandings have totally changed*," reported Leader 9. And for Leader 1, learning about virtues provided the "*missing link*" that helped him integrate the other leadership development work he had engaged in. The virtues-training had helped him realize that virtues were the "*repeatable thing*" that he needed to develop in himself and his team. And for Leader 4, the training triggered a new appreciation for the *humanness* of her staff. Previously she had been focused primarily on tasks, and TVP training had triggered a shift in her focus towards the feelings and emotions of herself and her team. While she still carried out corrections and delegation, she did so "*with more feeling and awareness of others' emotions."*

Engaging in unconventional, virtues-based development training was experienced like a trigger event and sparked shifts in the way leaders thought, felt, and behaved. And they related this experience as resoundingly positive. Leaders' positive, adaptive responses to the training were indicative of their developmental readiness; however, six of the nine leaders voiced some hesitation about how their experience and learnings would translate into their leadership roles. This hesitation stemmed from leaders being the only people within their organizations who had experienced the training and was compounded by a lack of

implementation resources or planning. At T2 and T3 all nine leaders explained that additional resources would have enabled them to better implement their experience of TVP into their practices of leadership. For instance, Leader 9 said that proper resources would have made implementation, "*a lot easier... it's hard to do on your own*". We will come back to these hesitations and process issues in the limitations section below.

Context

Of our nine leader participants, one operated within a strict command-and-control organizational structure; one held numerous directorships and owned a number of businesses; one was a senior leader in a large public sector department; two occupied top leadership roles within their organizations; and four were middle managers within large public sector departments. This array of sector, industry, organization, and role represented myriad contextual diversities relating to each leader's case; however, one contextual factor emerged as common to all leaders and as instrumental in the triggering of the mechanisms that gave rise to the outcomes leaders achieved as a result of TVP training. Context can be considered at multiple levels including organizational, interpersonal, and intrapersonal (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017), and it was the intrapersonal factor of developmental readiness that most clearly influenced leaders' experiences and outcomes from TVP training.

The first indicator of leaders' developmental readiness was the fact that each had self-selected to participate in the study knowing it would provide them with TVP training. Self-selecting for such a training opportunity spoke to their developmental efficacy by indicating their confidence in their ability to undertake and succeed in developmental efforts (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). Additionally, T1 leader interviews included questions based on the constructs of developmental readiness, including; self-concept clarity, leader-complexity, learning goal orientation, and developmental efficacy (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). Leader responses to these

questions were analysed alongside the developmental readiness literature (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Avolio & Hannah, 2009) to assess how ready each was.

Leader responses to questions based on the developmental readiness constructs demonstrated that each individual leader was developmentally ready. Table 6.1 illustrates the constructs of developmental readiness alongside the interview question asked at T1 and leader responses.

Table 6.1

Assessing leader developmental readiness

Developmental readiness	T1 Interview question and representative data
Learning goal orientation Leaders oriented towards *goals* more than learning, "resist engaging in learning experiences and...are less developmentally ready to engage in challenging leader development events" (Avolio & Hannah, 2008, p. 336), therefore a greater focus on learning indicates developmental readiness.	**When you start a challenging task, how much do you want to get the job done well –and how much do you think of it as an opportunity to learn?** "*I'm going to do a good job. But I also reflect and focus on learnings..."* – Leader 7 *"I think probably the learning process was most interesting to me around it"* – Leader 5 "*I take anything new as a challenge."* – Leader 4 "*Do the learning – get the outcome*" – Leader 3

Self-concept clarity Self-concept clarity is reflected in adaptive (versus maladaptive) responses to critical or constructive feedback. "Adaptive self-reflection represents a constructive process of reflection associated with patterns of thinking and emotions characterized by openness, positivity, and a learning goal-oriented perspective" (Avolio & Hannah, 2008, p. 338).	**What is it like when you receive critical feedback?** "*...nobody actually* likes *to hear it...but that's very short-lived thing. I go, 'Oh, that's no good. I didn't get that right,' but then I seek more feedback to see how I can improve.* – Leader 6 *"...with almost every gripe, there is a little grain of something that will actually make your operation better; something you can actually glean and learn from."* – Leader 2 *"I love critical feedback."* – Leader 9 "*I generally like critical feedback and would like more of it."* – Leader 8
Developmental efficacy Developmental efficacy represents leaders' "level of confidence that they can develop a specific ability or skill" (Avolio & Hannah, 2008, p. 337)	**When you undertake a new course or development activity, how confident are you that you'll be able to acquire the skills taught?** *"I don't think about not succeeding. Yeah, confident*." – Leader 7 *"...if you teach me something new, I'll pick it up."* – Leader 1 *"I'm really confident."*- Leader 6
Leader complexity Leader complexity is associated with "various social roles, such as being a team leader, coach, or project leader...a more complex leader will have greater personal resources to draw from" (Avolio & Hannah, 2008, p. 339)	**Other than your job, what other roles do you fill personal/professional/social/family)? Do these other roles influence your leadership role? If so, how?** *"I coach a kids sports team...there couldn't be a better thing to do to teach you how to manage people and get results."* – Leader 3 *"...my caring role (of children with disabilities) has given me a better leadership style because the kind of stress we've been under and the sort of problems we've had to navigate...have given me an awful lot of resilience, and creative thinking strategies...so my mind has learned to jump to solutions much more quickly..."* – Leader 5

As would be expected, there were slight variations between how aligned leaders were to each of the discrete constructs of developmental readiness, but, the data clearly indicated the developmental readiness of each individual leader. Developmental readiness is also affected by an individual's organizational context. In particular, the perceived psychological safety and strengths orientation of an organization can greatly influence a leader's readiness to develop (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). As stated, leaders came from vastly different organizations. To account for this, leader and other-rater interviews at T1 included questions about the perceived safety and strengths-focus of leaders' organizations. Responses to these questions indicated that while individual leaders were all quite developmentally ready, their respective organizational contexts varied in terms of how safe leaders felt to try new things or make themselves vulnerable and in terms of how much or how little the organization catered to individual strengths. Within-case analysis revealed that leaders who had expressed perceptions of low psychological safety and strengths orientation within their organizations were the most restrained in their implementation efforts.

While organization factors influencing developmental readiness varied, each of our nine participating leaders presented as developmentally ready. They were eager and confident in their ability to learn, possessed clear self-concepts, and had rich personal and professional experience contributing to their leader-complexity. Their readiness to develop was a crucial intrapersonal contextual factor, which facilitated the triggering of the mechanism which gave rise to their experience of TVP training, and the outcomes they achieved as a result of TVP training.

Outcomes Leaders Achieved as a Result of TVP Training

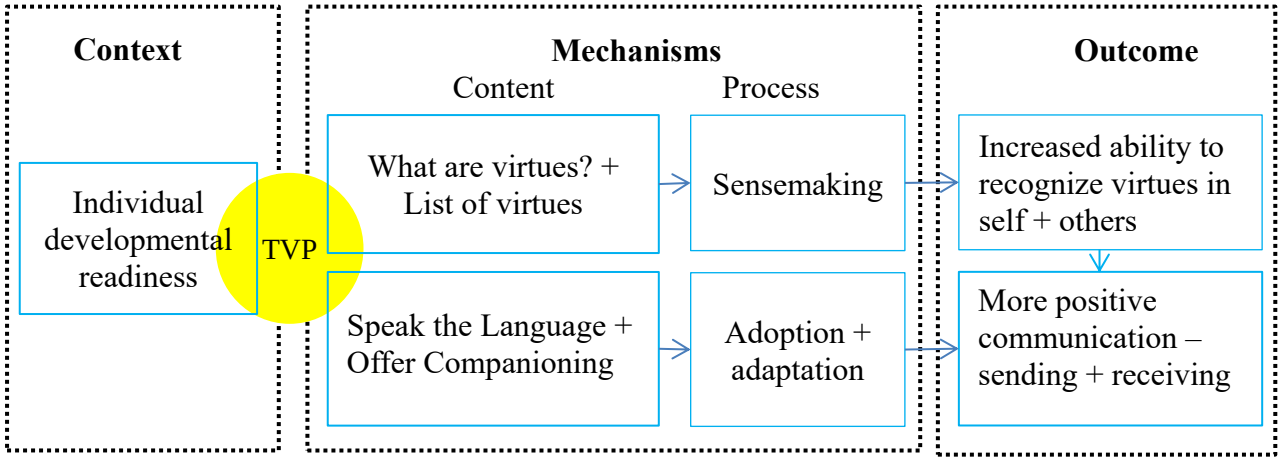
Our analysis identified two key leader outcomes achieved following TVP training, both of which were facilitated by mechanisms that were enabled by leaders' developmental readiness. As illustrated in Figure 6.3, experiencing TVP training facilitated an increased

understanding of virtues and an increased ability to recognized virtues in both themselves and others. Second, leaders adopted and adapted TVP strategies that enabled them to engage in more positive communication strategies both in terms of sending messages and receiving messages or listening to others.

Mechanisms are what actually make an intervention work. It is not an intervention that produces outcomes, but rather "the choices made by participants on whether and how to change their behaviors" (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017, p. 43). Nielsen and Miraglia (2017) suggest two types of mechanisms at play in intervention evaluations such as ours: a) the *content* of the intervention and b) the *process* of the intervention, and they stress the importance of explaining content and process mechanisms by drawing on theory.

Figure 6.3

Leader Outcomes



Content mechanisms.

The content mechanisms we identified were those materials and resources that leaders adopted. There were three content mechanisms that leaders unanimously identified from their experience of TVP; Speak the Language of Virtues (Strategy 1); Offer Companioning (Strategy 5), and the list of 100 virtues (Appendix III) provided to leaders during TVP training. These content mechanisms gave rise to changes in leaders' thinking and behavior.

Speaking the Language of Virtues, means providing feedback as an acknowledgment that includes explicit evidence linked to a specific virtue. Such as, '*thank you, it was thoughtful of you to include me in the email*' Where 'thoughtfulness' is the virtue, and 'include me in the email' is the evidence. After TVP training, all nine leaders reported having adopted the strategy of Speaking the Language of Virtues. The Language of Virtues provided leaders with a more structured, meaningful way to provide both positive and constructive feedback to their colleagues, as Leader 8 stated, "*it's definitely changed the way I would recognize what people have done and explain expectations to people*." In their theoretical evaluation of TVP strategies, Newstead et al. (*under review*) proposed that the Speaking the Language of Virtues would develop leader moral reasoning. The fact that leaders reported changes to the way they saw, understood, and thought about issues of virtues and good or right action suggests that this was the case.

Offering Companioning, was the second most widely adopted strategy and an important content mechanism sparking shifts in leader behavior. Offer Companioning is a seven-step listening technique whereby the listener 'listens another to their own solution' by asking 'cup emptying questions' and offering 'virtues recognitions' (Popov & Smith, 2005). Six of the nine participating leaders reported having implemented the strategy of Companioning. For instance, Leader 8 explained how she used the strategy with an upset employee;

> *I just listened to her for a long time. I also gave her some reminders of the things that she does do well, so the virtues recognition along the way. And I asked her...how she should deal with those things. I don't reckon I did it perfectly, but I did it better than I would have done before the training...* – Leader 8

Companioning was also the strategy most widely recognized observed by other-raters. For instance, at T3 Leader 2's colleague explained, *"...it's not that she wouldn't listen before but now I feel like there is more space for me to talk it through and to come to my own conclusion ...rather than being instructed. I think that is the shift."* Another other-rater

explained feeling more positive towards his leader after the training because his leader had become less likely to "*jump in and taking over the conversation*" and "*more open to listening and considering."* This evidence supports the proposition Newstead et al. (*under review*) developed for the Companioning strategy which suggested that when employed by leaders, Companioning would demonstrate care, prompt self-reflection, validation, and prosocial behavior.

During the training, participating leaders were given a list of 100 virtues. This artefact was identified by the leaders as an important content mechanism for shifting their thinking as it provided a list of virtues they could use to Speak the Language of Virtues and Offer Companioning. The virtues list broadened the repertoire of virtues that leaders used to discern their own and others' behavior. For instance, Leader 7 reported:

> *...probably the best thing I did was put up the list of the virtues next to my computer...so they're in my line of sight frequently. Which helps me when I'm thinking, 'what do I really want to say to this person?'...when I'm searching for something to more accurately provide feedback on or thank them for.*

Leaders also reported using the virtues list as a reference when they were providing feedback to others. With Leader 1 stating:

> *I really have found it beneficial to have [the list] sitting on my desk...the other day, I wasn't able to get any traction with some stuff. So I went back to it and thought, 'what characteristic might I be missing?'*

The process of reflecting on virtues to inform communication processes indicates support for the propositions of Newstead et al.'s (*under review*) that Speaking the Language of Virtues would increase leader moral reasoning. Our analyses revealed that the TVP strategies no 1, Speak the Language of Virtues and no 5, Offer Companioning, and the list of 100 virtues represented important content mechanisms. These content mechanisms in turn triggered the *process* mechanisms of sensemaking and adaptation.

Process mechanisms.

The processes instigated by a program such as TVP represent important mechanisms by which changes and outcomes (such as those realized by our leaders) can be achieved (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). The two primary process mechanisms identified within our data were (i) sensemaking, whereby leaders made sense of their experience and attained a new understanding of virtues; and (ii) adaptation, whereby leaders adapted what they had learned to suit their respective leadership styles.

Accounting for sensemaking has been identified as essential to understanding how participants' mental models determine their responses to an intervention (Nielsen & Randall, 2013). "The important question here is: 'Did the intervention bring about a change in participants' mental models?' (Nielsen & Randall, 2013, p. 608). Sensemaking involves a 'noticing and bracketing' process, in other words, inventing a new meaning or a new interpretation for something that was previously not recognized as independent or understandable (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). The process of sensemaking relates to the notion that TVP and in particular Speaking the Language of Virtues would result in in enhanced leader moral reasoning (Newstead et al., *under review*).

Sensemaking accounts for the process mechanism whereby leaders came to recalibrate their understanding of virtue, and how virtues underpin and give rise to behavior. At T1 and T2 leaders were asked what they understood virtue or virtues to mean. Table 6.2 provides comparative data to illustrate how the process mechanism of sensemaking resulted in leaders' new understandings of virtues. Sensemaking explains how leaders' understanding of the meaning of virtues changed, and how they recognized virtues in themselves, and others, following TVP training.

Table 6.2

Leaders Understanding of Virtue at T1 and T2

T1 understanding of virtues	T2 and T3 understanding of virtues
Question asked:	Question asked:
What does the term 'virtues' means to you? What are virtues? Can you give me some examples?	**Has your understanding of virtues changed? If so, how?**
"I'm not 100% all over the virtues and like if you asked me to reel off the virtues, I couldn't." – Leader 9	*"My understanding has completely, 100% changed...when we had the first interview, I read up on the virtues with the information you originally sent around about doing the study and I knew it would interest me. But I didn't completely understand. I had no idea that there was going to be a list of words and how we're going to use them...I feel like I started at zero, and, you know, if 100 is being all over it...I'm probably about 40."* – Leader 9
"I'm a bit fuzzy about it..." – Leader 7	*"It's probably that leap from understanding that they're there and that they're good -- to embedding them into what I do*." – Leader 7
"*I guess (virtues are) having the right attitude and making virtuous decisions...avoiding conflicts of interest or addressing conflicts of interest. Treating people with respect..."* – Leader 3	Virtues are "*a way of...recognizing what people do and the sort of characteristics they bring to a task or to their relationships with other people, and the way they work."* – Leader 3

The virtues list given to leaders (i.e. a content mechanism) supported the process of sensemaking the meaning of virtue and virtues, and leaders' ability to make sense of behavior in terms of virtues that might have given rise to the behavior. For example, at T2 Leader 1 explained a situation involving an employee who was difficult to manage. He reported that following the training he was able to see the employee's "*volume and arm waving*" as

reflective of the employee's "*passion*". Leader 1 further elaborated that this employee could also be:

> *...very rigid in his thoughts, and that could be inflexibility, or it could be steadfastness...so we've just got to unpick that for him, and that's what I'll do, so he can see that the words mean something, and if I give him a little bit of an explanation about what it looks like, then he can hopefully check and balance himself with a bit of flexibility or openness.*

In this example, we can see that, in the wake of TVP training, Leader 1 was now making sense of an employee's behavior in terms of excess of or lacking in certain virtues. This indicates a development in Leader 1's moral reasoning. And by identifying the specific virtues related to the employee's behavior, Leader 1 was better placed to help the employee balance difficult behaviors.

By triggering leader sensemaking, TVP training enabled leaders not only to recognize virtues in the behavior of others, but also in themselves. For instance, after a tense meeting, Leader 9 reflected, *"I showed resilience in that discussion ..."* And instead of feeling stressed by an event, Leader 5 thought, "*perhaps I didn't get that quite right...but at least I stayed cheerful."* Sensemaking was a crucial mechanism whereby leaders shifted their understanding of the word 'virtues' and also how they identified virtues in their own and others' behaviors. This is reflected by Leader 7 who surmised,

> *...if someone was to say to me -- what was the benefit of the training for you? I would say a new way of thinking about the virtues...a different way of thinking about my actions and behaviors and thoughts, and the actions and behaviors of other people.*

Our study does not claim to be a comprehensive assessment of the five propositions proffered by Newstead et al. (*under review*), but the data evidencing processes of sensemaking strongly support their proposition that Speaking the Language of Virtues would enhance leader moral reasoning. Enhanced leader moral reasoning is evidenced by their reported ability to think through situations and behavior in terms of excess or lacking of specific virtues following TVP training.

The second process mechanism identified from our analysis of the data was adaption. All nine leaders reported adapting the content mechanisms (Speak the Language of Virtues; Companioning, and the Virtues List) that they had adopted from the training. Speak the Language of Virtues was adapted to suit the communication style of each leader, as Leader 2 explained, "*I was more interested in taking the virtues and learnings and using them in a way I felt comfortable in my situation*". While Leader 3 recounted that he was *"big on encouraging people and recognizing what they've done..."* and, while he did not always use the exact words, "*I use the concept.*"

Six of the nine participating leaders emphasized how their processes of listening, or receiving message had improved following TVP training, which they attributed to the strategy of Offering Companioning. However, the seven-step Companioning strategy underwent a process of adaptation to suit leaders' individual circumstances and style. As Leader 2 explained,

> *...I think it's more a shift in focus. I don't sort of sit down and think, 'Okay, these are the steps I'm going through...' Rather, it's just allowing people the bandwidth to get the problem out and start solving the problem themselves...that's one of the things I haven't done in the past...*

Leader 3 reported that he was,

> *...probably not using it as well as I could. But I've certainly taken on board that whole position of letting someone keep talking rather than butting in early and sort of almost taking over the conversation...I've been letting them find their own solution.*

These passages illustrate how the content of the Companioning strategy was tailored and adopted by leaders through a process of adaptation.

The list of 100 virtues leaders received during training (Appendix III), while representing an important content mechanism, also underwent processes of adaptation. All nine leaders reported feeling uncomfortable about some of the virtues on the list of 100. While leaders varied in which virtues resonated with them most and which ones they were

least comfortable with, it seemed to be the virtues with religious connotations that elicited the most discomfort for instance, *prayerfulness, purity,* and *reverence.* As illustrated in Table 6.3, leaders adapted the list of virtues to suit workplace and culture norms, to suit personal communication styles, and to avoid religious connotations.

Table 6.3

Adapting The List of Virtues

Adapting the virtues list	
To suit workplace culture and norms	*"I'm better off using those words that we understand and create my own little list of Virtues for Work which do tie back into this, but that makes sense to my staff."* – Leader 9, T2
To suit personal communication style	"*And the thing is, I like the word brave. And brave and courageous are exactly the same thing or synonyms for each other and I will prefer to use the word brave because brave is in my vocabulary."* – Leader 2, T2
To avoid spiritual/religious connotations	*"I need to make sure that's not anything religious...So I might have to twist it and I have to change it a little bit."* – Leader 4, T2
The word 'virtues'	
	"...the one thing I actually did change was I didn't call them virtues.... I actually referred to them as characteristics...because I think the blokes in my work environment will glaze over it you call them the virtues." – Leader 1, T3 *"'Virtues' is just not the language I would typically use...I would if I was talking with you...But if I was talking with someone else about them, I don't think I'd refer to them as 'a virtue'. Because other people might perhaps understand it better if I was to talk about them as characteristics or strengths or ways of being, rather than virtues."* – Leader 7, T3

> *"The word 'virtue' is a bit of a hard sell I think particularly in sort of the Australian context...I like 'character strength'".* – Leader 2, T2

As per Table 6.3 leaders also adapted how they referred to the term 'virtues'. One leader was confident that she would continue to use the term 'virtues' while the other eight indicated they would be likely to use other terms, such as *strength*, *character strength*, or *characteristic*. Which virtues leaders were more or less comfortable using and whether or not the term 'virtues' itself is suited to the organizational context are issues worthy of future research, as discussed below.

Leaders may not have implemented TVP strategies verbatim, but TVP strategies, especially Speak the Language of Virtues and Offer Companioning, provided content mechanisms that triggered processes of adaptation whereby leaders adapted the strategies to suit their respective leadership styles. The interaction of these content and process mechanisms resulted in improved communication processes. Following TVP training, leaders reported engaging in different and *better* communication processes. And other-rater interviews at T3 corroborated this.

Other-rater interviews at T3 triangulated leaders' self-reported changes and development over the five month duration of the study. At T3 other-raters were asked if they had noticed any shifts or changes in their leaders, and if so, what were they? These data supported leaders' claims that they had shifted their processes of providing feedback to resemble TVP Strategy 1, Speak the Language of Virtues, and that they had changed their approach to listening in light of TVP Strategy 5, Offer Companioning. One of Leader 7's other-raters reported at T3,

> *it's not that she wouldn't listen before, but I feel like there is more space for me to talk it through and to come to my own conclusion then bring my own things out rather than being instructed. So I think that that is the shift.*

While an other-rater of Leader 2 explained,

> *...he listens better than he did previously...more open to different point of view...before it was more sort of him, sort of telling you or talking at you as opposed to it being a back and forth conversation...and I definitely feel more positive towards him...*

These final passages indicate support for the proposition that Offering Companioning demonstrates care, prompts self-reflection, validation and prosocial tendencies, as suggested by Newstead et al. (*under review*).

DISCUSSION

Our study represents an effort to advance understanding of how we scholars might better facilitate the development of *good* leaders. To do so we conducted the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program to evaluate how leaders experienced TVP training, and what outcomes they achieved as a result. Our guiding midrange theory, study design, data collection and analysis were informed by a critical realist evaluation approach (Edwards et al., 2014; Greenhalgh, 2014; Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013; Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017; Pawson & Manzano-Santaella, 2012). Critical realist evaluation also guided how we enfolded literature into our synthesis to produce a clear findings model which identifies the CMO-configurations which gave rise to leaders' experience of TVP and the outcomes they achieved as a result (Figure 6.3).

Leaders experienced TVP as a trigger event that enabled them to better understand virtues and to recognize virtues in their own and others' behavior. Additionally, TVP strategies were adopted and adapted to suit individual leaders and to inform improved communication practices in terms of how leaders both sent and received messages. Importantly, these findings occurred in consideration of the individual-level contextual factor of developmental readiness. Accordingly, we refined our MRT to:

> *Developmentally ready leaders experience TVP as a trigger event. As a trigger event, TVP facilitates better understanding of what virtues are, how to recognize virtues in behavior, and how to incorporate virtues into communication processes.*

This refined MRT reflects developmental readiness as the key contextual factor influencing the triggering of mechanisms. The mechanisms triggered included content mechanisms originating from instruction in virtue, the list of 100 virtues, and the strategies of Speaking the Language of Virtues and Offering Companioning. These content mechanisms were then influenced by the process mechanisms of sensemaking and adaptation. The process mechanisms of sensemaking facilitated leaders' new understandings of what virtues are and how to recognize virtues in behavior. And the process mechanism of adaptation gave rise to leaders' personalized approaches to integrating virtues in their communication processes of sending and receiving messages. These findings have implications for the scholarly fields of virtue ethics and leadership development, as well as the practice of leadership.

Virtue ethics considers life a pursuit of eudemonic wellbeing, or meaningful happiness, the route to which is via the development of virtues (Annas, 2012, 2015; Aristotle, 350BCE/1962). By evidencing that TVP training facilitated leaders' ability to understand, recognize, and draw on virtues to inform their communication processes, our findings imply that, as Annas (2012) suggested, TVP may provide a means of implementing virtue ethics in practice. Our study does not report on massive organizational transformation, but it did find that TVP enabled leaders to engage noticeably differently in everyday encounters. Leaders and their other-raters reported shifts in their daily practices of leadership; shifts that incorporated virtues.

By prompting leaders to reflect on and incorporate virtues into their daily leadership conversations, TVP facilitated a multitude of daily opportunities for leaders to practice and develop virtue. To describe these daily opportunities to demonstrate virtue, or not, Ciulla (2017) dubbed the phrase 'morality in the miniature'. Morality in the miniature explains how

habituated virtue (or lack thereof) in everyday micro-moments develops habits which influence leaders' conduct and decisions during larger-scale ethical dilemmas (Ciulla, 2017). This implies that by prompting leaders to reflect on and incorporate virtues into their daily activities, or into their morality in the miniature, TVP training may have contributed to the development of leaders' good moral habits. The influence TVP training had in how leaders made sense of behavior as indicative of an excess or lacking of virtue also indicated increased moral reasoning, as Newstead et al. (*under review*) proposed.

Changed communication processes were the primary outcome leaders achieved from TVP training. The centrality of communication to the processes of leadership suggests that these findings have substantial implications for the field of leadership development. Our study found that TVP training helped leaders communicate better by facilitating their new understanding of virtues, and by providing them with strategies they adapted to enhance their processes of both sending and receiving messages. By enabling leaders to incorporate virtue into both the sending and the receiving of messages, TVP training facilitated the integration of virtues into many facets of the leaders' communication processes.

The conversations and communication processes leaders engage in are directly related to the ethical climates of an organization (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005). It has been convincingly argued that communication is integral to all a leader does (Barge, 2014). How else, other than through communication, does a leader move others to do something? We are not the first to suggest a virtues language can be *learned* (Manz et al., 2006; Vasalou, 2012), but we believe ours is the first study to demonstrate how virtues language can be *taught* to leaders. Teaching practicing leaders how to speak and listen with virtue promises the opportunity for leaders to engage in conversations that foster ethical climates more frequently and more effectively.

By equipping leaders with adaptable strategies and an inclusive list of 100 virtues, TVP provides development implications to newer perspectives of ethical leadership theory, in particular moralized leadership (Fehr, Kai Chi, & Dang, 2015). Moralized leadership expands on early ethical leadership theory by incorporating moral foundation theory (e.g. Graham et al., 2013; Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009), to explain how resonance with different moral foundations (care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, sanctity/degradation, authority/subversion, and liberty/oppression) lead followers to moralize leaders' behavior in different ways. The adaptable strategies and list of 100 virtues of TVP offers an approach and a lexicon inclusive enough to account for a plurality of moral foundations upon which followers might moralize their behavior (Fehr et al., 2015).

In terms of leadership development, the overarching implication of our study is that TVP training holds the potential to help leaders *be* and *do good* by equipping them with an understanding of virtues and virtues strategies to inform communication processes integral to their daily practices of leadership. Importantly, the fact that TVP is easily accessible via the web implies it might not only inform future leadership research but can also guide efforts of leadership development in practice.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As the first empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program, this study asked the questions, *how do leaders experience TVP?* and, *what outcomes do they experience as a result?* In exploring these questions, our study makes some important contributions and implications, it also has a number of limitations. Primary among the limitations of this study are its small sample size, and its reliance on interviews, which are susceptible to social desirability. Social desirability represents the process whereby research subjects engage in self-deception and/or other-deception in order to represent themselves favourably (Nederhof,

1985). When asking leaders to report on their own leadership practices, it is understandable that they might present themselves in a favourable way. Various methods of detection and measure of social desirability have been developed, but none works absolutely, nor under all conditions (Nederhof, 1985). Using other-rater interviews to triangulate leaders' self-reports was an attempt to account for the influence of social desirability among leader interviews. This speaks to another limitation, which is our overreliance on self-report. Each leader had at least one other-rater report on him or her, but more data from leaders' peers, superiors, and subordinates would have provided a more comprehensive data set.

Nine participating leaders represents a small sample, and all nine leaders came from the same rural region of Australia, were in employment, held leadership positions, and worked for organizations willing to support their participation in a leadership development study. Critical realist evaluation allowed us to synthesise findings that were transferable by clearly identifying the context-mechanisms configurations enabling leader outcomes, hence the phrasing of our findings in terms of developmentally ready leaders. In discussing future research we call for larger studies, studies that solicit data from a greater proportion of other-raters including the use of mixed-methods. More specifically, future research might employ a pre-test/post-test mixed-methods assessment of ethical climates (Cullen, Victor, & Bronson, 1993), ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005; Riggio, Zhu, Reina, & Maroosis, 2010; Zhu, Treviño, & Zheng, 2016), virtuous leadership (e.g Riggio et al., 2010; Wang & Hackett, 2015), or perceptions of organizational virtuousness (Cameron, Bright, & Caza, 2004).

Future studies might also consider the use of booster sessions following the two days of TVP training and might explore how TVP influences shifts within an organization when more than one individual leader receives the training. And, while our data indicated support for some of the theoretical propositions put forward by Newstead et al. (under review) we argue for larger studies equipped with mixed methods which might more comprehensively

address the propositions based on each of TVP's five strategies. Also interesting, would be to explore how TVP is experienced by leaders who were less developmentally ready, or how TVP might contribute to developmental readiness.

A final limitation of this study, and any future study of TVP, is that as a program it may be misused. Through its list of virtues and language-based strategies, TVP provides a lexicon and quasi-scripts that might be employed for ill-intent or manipulation. In this way, TVP like any other tool, is susceptible to the intentions of those who use it. However, we trust enough in the potential of TVP to help well-intentioned leaders lead well to justify advancing it as a leadership development program.

CONCLUSION

In order to substantiate the claims of critical realist evaluation, Kempster and Parry (2011) pose three questions: Is it pragmatic – does it give us something we can actually work with? Can this guide action? Is this practically adequate – does it explain what actually, (usually at least) happens? And, is this plausible – does this make sense in more than once context?

By providing the first empirical evaluation of TVP and finding that it facilitated leaders' new understandings and improved communication practices, we advance a pragmatic program to inform leadership development efforts. By synthesising our findings across nine leader cases and enfolding literature as we did so, we were able to explain what actually happened for each leader, and for all nine leaders, indicating the practical adequacy of the study. Each of the nine leader participants came from a distinct organizational context, and yet the findings we distilled in terms of their experiences of TVP and the outcomes they achieved as a result make sense in each of their own respective contexts, suggesting the plausibility of our claims.

This study represents an important step towards bridging the divide between the scholarship and practice of leadership by harnessing the strengths of critical realist evaluation to provide empirical evidence of how TVP can facilitate leader development. For developmentally ready leaders, TVP is experienced as a trigger event which accelerates their positive development by providing a new understanding of virtues and how to recognize virtues in behavior, a list of 100 virtues to draw on, and adaptable strategies to inform improved leadership communication processes. TVP is a grassroots initiative, readily accessible by anyone on the web[9]. In conducting and sharing the findings of this study, it is our hope to prompt the adoption of TVP by practicing leaders and to encourage further research into how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* leadership.

[9] The official website for TVP can be found at: www.virtuesproject.com

POSTSCRIPT

In Chapter 6, I have reported the findings of my empirical study, which is the first known evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program. The key findings of this chapter include that TVP is experienced as a trigger event by developmentally ready leaders. As a trigger event, TVP provided leaders with an increased understanding of virtues and the ability to recognize virtues in behaviour. This then influenced leaders to engage in more positive communication practices and contributed to their development as *good* leaders. These findings were synthesized using critical realist evaluation techniques and are articulated in a testable model (Figure 6.3).

As an initial exploration of TVP, my study did not seek to comprehensively assess each of the theoretical propositions enumerated in Chapter 5. However, I did identify evidence to support that Speaking the Language of Virtues developed leader moral reasoning (proposition 1), and that Offering Companioning prompted self-reflection, validation, and prosocial tendencies among other-raters (proposition 5). This initial support of Chapter 5's theoretical propositions, in conjunction with my conceptual analysis (Chapters 3-5), and the findings of my empirical study lay the foundation for future research. In particular, I advocate larger mixed methods studies designed to test and extend both my findings model (Chapter 6) and theoretical propositions (Chapter 5).

In the next and final chapter, I summarize and integrate the conceptual and empirical analysis I have undertaken in this program of work. I highlight the overall contributions to scholarship and practice, outline implications for scholarship and practice, and point to future research directions.

CHAPTER 6 REFERENCES

Annas, J. (2012). Being virtuous and doing the right thing. In R. Shafer-Landau (Ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology* (2 ed., Vol. 14) Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Annas, J. (2015). Applying virtue to ethics (Society of Applied Philosophy Annual Lecture 2014). *Journal of Applied Psychology, 32*(1), 1-14.

Antonakis, J. (2017). On doing better science: From thrill of discovery to policy implications. *The Leadership Quarterly, 28*(1), 5-12.

Aristotle. (350BCE/1962). *Nicomachean Ethics* (M. Ostwald, Trans.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962.

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2008). Developmental readiness: Accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(4), 331-347.

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2009). Leader developmental readiness. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2*(3), 284–287.

Avolio, B. J., Reichardb, R. J., Hannah, S. T., Walumbwa, F. O., & Chan, A. (2009). A meta-analytic review of leadership impact research: Experimental and quasi-experimental studies. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*(5), 764-784.

Barge, J. K. (2014). Pivotal leadership and the art of conversation. *Leadership, 10*(1), 56–78.

Bhaskar, R. (2014). Foreword. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Brown, M. E., Trevino, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*(2), 117-134.

Cameron, K. S., Bright, D., & Caza, A. (2004). Exploring the relationships between organizational virtuousness and performance. *The American Behavioral Scientist, 47*(6), 766-790.

Ciulla, J. B. (2017). Leadership, virtue, and morality in the miniature. In A. J. G. Sison, G. R. Beabout & I. Ferrero (Eds.), *Handbook of Virtue Ethics in Business and Management* (pp. 941-949): Springer, Dordrecht.

Conger, J. A. (1998). Qualitative research as a cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership. *Leadership Quarterly, 9*, 107-121.

Cooper, C. D., Scandura, T. A., & Schriesheim, C. A. (2005). Looking forward but learning from our past: Potential challenges to developing authentic leadership theory and authentic leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 475-493.

Cullen, J. B., Victor, B., & Bronson, J. W. (1993). The ethical climate questionnaire: An assessment of its development and validity. *Psychological Reports, 73*(2), 667-674.

Day, D., Fleenor, J., Atwater, L., Sturm, R., & McKee, R. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 63-82.

Day, D., & Harrison, M. (2007). A multilevel, identity-based approach to leadership development. *Human Resource Management Review, 17*, 360-737.

Edwards, P., O'Mahoney, J., & Vincent, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University press.

Eisenhardt, K., M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review, 14*(4), 532-550

Eisenhardt, K., M., & Graebner, M., E. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(1), 25–32.

Fehr, R., Kai Chi, Y. A. M., & Dang, C. (2015). Moralized leadership: The construction and consequences of ethical leadership perceptions. *Academy of Management Review, 40*(2), 182-209. doi: 10.5465/amr.2013.0358

Gardner, W. L., Avolio, B. J., Luthans, F., May, D. R., & Walumbwa, F. (2005). "Can you see the real me?" A self-based model of authentic leader and follower development. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*, 343-372. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.003

Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 47*, 55-130.

Greenhalgh, J. (2014). Realist synthesis. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Haidt, J., Graham, J., & Joseph, C. (2009). Above and below left–right: Ideological narratives and moral foundations. *Psychological Inquiry, 20*(2-3), 110-119.

Harman, G. (1999). *Moral philosophy meets social psychology: Virtue ethics and the fundamental attribution error.* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Aristotelian society.

Isabella, L. A. (1990). Evolving interpretations as a change unfolds: How managers construe key organizational events. *Academy of Management Journal, 33*(1), 7-41.

Kellerman, B. (2012). *The End of Leadership*. Broadway, New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Kempster, S., & Iszatt-White, M. (2013). Towards co-constructed coaching: Exploring the integration of coaching and co-constructed autoethnography in leadership development. *Management Learning, 44*(4), 319-336.

Kempster, S., & Parry, K. W. (2011). Grounded theory and leadership research: A critical realist perspective. *Leadership Quarterly, 22*(1), 106-120. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.12.010

Kessler, I., & Bach, S. (2014). Comparing Cases. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lacouture, A., Breton, E., Guichard, A., & Ridde, V. (2015). The concept of mechanism from a realist approach: A scoping review to facilitate its operationalization in public health program evaluation. *Implementation Science, 10*, 1-10.

Louden, R. B. (1984). On some vices of virtue ethics. *American Philosophical Quarterly, 21*(3), 227-236.

Manz, K. P., Marx, R. D., Neal, J. A., & Manz, C. C. (2006). The language of virtues: Toward an inclusive approach for integrating spirituality in management education. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 3*(1/2), 104-125.

Marchal, B., van Belle, S., van Olmen, J., Hoerée, T., & Kegels, G. (2012). Is realist evaluation keeping its promise? A review of published empirical studies in the field of health systems research. *Evaluation, 18*(2), 192-212.

Nederhof, A. J. (1985). Methods of coping with social desirability bias: A review. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 15*(3), 263-280.

Nielsen, K., & Abildgaard, J. S. (2013). Organizational interventions: A research-based framework for the evaluation of both process and effects. *Work and Stress, 27*(3), 278-297. doi: 10.1080/02678373.2013.812358

Nielsen, K., & Miraglia, M. (2017). What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the 'what works?' question in organizational intervention research. *Human Relations, 70*(1), 40–62.

Nielsen, K., & Randall, R. (2013). Opening the black box: Presenting a model for evaluating organizational level interventions. *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology, 22*(5), 601-617.

Nielsen, K., Randall, R., Holten, A., & Gonzalez, E. R. (2010). Conducting organizational-level occupational health interventions: What works? *Work & Stress, 24*(3), 234-259.

Owens, B. P., & Hekman, D. R. (2012). Modeling how to grow: An inductive examination of humble leader behaviors, contingencies, and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*(4), 787-818. doi: 10.5465/amj.2010.0441

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Pawson, R., & Manzano-Santaella, A. (2012). A realist diagnostic workshop. *Evaluation, 18*(2), 176-191.

Popov, L. K. (2015). The Virtues Project. Retrieved June 2015, from http://www.virtuesproject.com/

Popov, L. K., & Smith, K. (2005). *The Virtues Project Educator's Guide: Simple ways to Create a Culture of Character. Rev ed*. Toronto: Ontario College of Teachers.

Puente, S., Crous, F., & Venter, A. (2007). The role of a positive trigger event in actioning authentic leadership development. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 5*(1), 11-18.

Riggio, R. E., Zhu, W., Reina, C., & Maroosis, J. A. (2010). Virtue-based measurement of ethical leadership: The leadership virtues questionnaire. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(4), 235-250. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022286

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation, 27*(2), 237-246. doi: 10.1177/1098214005283748

Vasalou, S. (2012). Educating virtue as a mastery of language. *Journal of Ethics, 16*(1), 67-87. doi: 10.1007/s10892-011-9111-5

Wang, G., & Hackett, R. D. (2015). Conceptualization and measurement of virtuous leadership: Doing well by doing good. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-25.

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization Science, 16*(4), 409-421.

Whetstone, J. T. (2003). The language of managerial excellence: Virtues as understood and applied. *Journal of Business Ethics*(4), 343-357.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Applications of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication.

Zhu, W., Treviño, L. K., & Zheng, X. (2016). Ethical leaders and their followers: The transmission of moral identity and moral attentiveness. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 26*(1), 95-115. doi: 10.1017/beq.2016.11

CHAPTER

SEVEN

Discussion and Conclusions.

Chapter 7 is written as a conventional chapter.

INTRODUCTION

My thesis provides the first theoretical analysis and empirical evaluation of if and how *The Virtues Project* (TVP) training program facilitates the development of *good* leaders. The work conducted in this thesis reconceptualizes virtue, makes a case for virtue-based leadership development, demonstrates that TVP is a conceptually robust program to do so, and provides the first empirical evidence of leaders' experience of TVP and how TVP facilitates the development of *good* leadership. My thesis was initially prompted by a desire to assess how leaders experienced TVP and what they achieved as a result, but my reading of the positive organizational inquiry literature (POI), leadership and leadership development literature, and virtue ethics identified several theoretical and conceptual gaps that needed to be addressed *prior* to any empirical evaluation of TVP. Chapters 3-5 contain my conceptual analysis and my empirical study is reported in Chapter 6.

Chapter 3 undertook a scoping review to reconceptualize virtue to inform the field of POI. It did so by drawing on the ontology of critical realism and the philosophy of virtue ethics. A second scoping review in Chapter 4 built on the reconceptualization of virtue (Chapter 3) and a deep ontology of leadership to illustrate virtue as the locus of *good* leadership and justify a virtues-based approach to leadership development. Also, in Chapter 4, TVP was advanced and the implicit assumptions of its program theory explored. Chapter 5 conducted a narrative review to align the five strategies of TVP to virtue ethics, socio-psychological theory pertaining to organizational leadership, moral foundation theory (MFT) and the emerging theory of moralized leadership to explain why and how TVP is expected to achieve outcomes as a leadership development program. Against the backdrop of this conceptual analysis and development work, Chapter 6 reported on the findings of my empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program.

KEY FINDINGS AND UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE

In this section, I highlight the key findings of my conceptual and empirical work and the contributions they make to both scholarship and practice.

Reconceptualizing virtue to inform POI

The POI literature contains countless references to virtue, virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtu*ousness;* however, these terms are rarely defined and often used interchangeably with little or no distinction made between them. Furthermore, virtue is sometimes regarded as an individual-level concept and sometimes as a collective one; it is unclear as to whether virtue is regarded as a trait or state; and opinions seem divided on the inherency versus instrumentality of virtue in organizations. These gaps and discrepancies lead to the questions:

RQ 1b: What is virtue?

RQ 1b: What is the relationship between virtue, virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtu*ousness*?

RQ 1c: How does virtue differ from other similar concepts?

RQ 1d: How do we know what is virtuous in which contexts?

These questions are addressed in Chapter 3 which conducts a scoping review of POI and Aristotelian virtue ethics (AVE) and employs the ontological framework of critical realism to provide a deep ontology of virtue. In doing, so I make a number of contributions to the field of POI. The first is a clearer reconceptualization and definition of virtue as *the human inclination to feel, think, and act in ways that express moral excellence and contribute to the common good*. The second is an illustration of the deep ontology that provides distinctions between virtue, virtu*es,* and virtu*ous*. These contributions are important because it is only upon clear definitions and concepts that good theory can be built (Suddaby, 2010). This work contributes to the field of POI by informing more robust theory building in future research. The five-factor framework I develop in response to research question 1d, *How do*

we know what is virtuous in which contexts? contributes a usable tool for deciphering what behaviors are virtuous and highlights some aspects of virtue ethics that need to be considered in the determination of such, including the issues of intent, *telos,* and outcome.

The five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts articulated in Chapter 3 also makes an important contribution to practice. While a precise definition of virtue may be more important to theory building than the daily practices of leaders, my intent is that the five-factor framework can guide scholars and practitioners equally. The framework offers practitioners a simple tool that can help them determine what is virtuous within their particular contexts.

Making a Case for Virtues-Based Leadership Development

There is a proliferation of theory within the scholarly fields of leadership and leadership development; a review in 2014 counted over 60 discrete theories (Dinh et al., 2014), and this number continues to grow. In my reading of the leadership and leadership development literature, I was inspired by those voices calling for less perseverating over the descriptive question of 'what is leadership?' and more attention on the normative question, 'what is *good* leadership?' (Ciulla, 2014; Ciulla, 2004; Solomon, 1993). I was further spurred by the acknowledgement that the booming field of leadership scholarship seems to be failing to make a tangible impact on actual practice of organizational leadership (Kellerman, 2012). These issues prompted my following questions:

RQ 2a: What is *good* leadership?

RQ 2b: How can scholars help practicing leaders to *be* and *do good*?

I addressed these questions in Chapter 4. To do so, I built on my deep ontology of virtue (Chapter 3) and a deep ontology of leadership to illustrate virtue as the locus of *good* leadership. By demonstrating the alignment between developing virtue and developing leadership, I made a case for virtues-based leadership development. The primary contribution

of this work is to advance virtues-based development as a promising way to develop *good* leaders in practice. This is an important contribution to the field of leadership scholarship which is coming under fire for its over-reliance on cross-sectional bi-variate correlation studies (Antonakis, 2017), its overly simplistic measurement of job satisfaction to assess leadership development (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014), and its proliferation of theory often without empirical evidence to support it (Antonakis, 2017). Not to mention its limited impact on practice (Kellerman, 2012).

In Chapter 4, I drew on virtue ethics to explore the implicit assumptions that compose the program theory of TVP. By doing so, I further integrated virtue ethics and leadership scholarship. I also introduced moral foundation theory (MFT) and the related theory of moralized leadership (Fehr et al., 2015). I did so to highlight how these theories account for a plurality of moral foundations broader than the justice/care focus of conventional ethical leadership theory. The plurality of MFT aligns with the inclusive, holistic approach of TVP and the behaviors indicative of moralized leadership align with the strategies of TVP. By making the case for virtues-based leadership development and proffering TVP as a means of doing so, I contribute to a new and promising approach within leadership scholarship, one that focuses on how we can harness the strengths of scholarship to enable practicing leaders to *be* and *do good*. My work in Chapter 4 argues for focusing on developing *good* leaders in practice and provides a clear picture of how virtues-based development might do so.

Theorizing TVP

TVP was founded over 30 years ago and is now practiced in more than 100 countries (Popov, 2015). In 2012, renowned virtue ethicist Julia Annas named TVP for its ability to translate the potentiality of virtues into practice (Annas, 2012). Annas (2012) also warned that in its current state, TVP is undertheorized. This comment from Annas (2012), as well as my own

hesitations at the lack of evidence or theoretical rigour behind TVP prompted the following questions:

RQ 3a: How does TVP align to extant theory and evidence?

RQ 3b: What outcomes might we expect leaders to achieve from TVP training?

I answer these questions in Chapter 5 by conducting a narrative review. In Chapter 5, I aligned each strategy of TVP with virtue ethics, socio-psychological theory relating to organizational leadership, MFT, and moralized leadership. Based on this alignment, I developed a theoretical proposition based on each of the five strategies of TVP to explain how and why it is expected to work as a leadership development program. Theorizing TVP in this way makes contributions to leadership scholarship, virtue ethics, and leadership practice.

To the field of leadership scholarship, I contribute a theorized program of virtues-based leadership development. By doing so, I hope to spur an approach within leadership scholarship focused more on the development of *good* leadership rather than a proliferation of theory. And the theoretical propositions articulated in Chapter 5 can inform such an approach. The propositions in Chapter 5 also suggest the potential of TVP to develop moralize leadership (Fehr et al., 2015). To the field of virtue ethics, theorizing TVP lends credence to a program that has the potential to translate the philosophy of virtue ethics into practice, thereby refuting a critique of the field as being inapplicable (Annas, 2012, 2015). Finally, by theorizing TVP I lend credibility to a readily accessible and practical development program. Practicing leaders can access TVP online, knowing that the assumptions and strategies of the program are not just intuitive, but also well aligned with extant theory.

Empirically Evaluating TVP as a Leadership Development Program

Empirically evaluating TVP as a leadership development program (Chapter 6) aims to bridge the practice/theory divide. Leadership scholarship is bursting with theory, but is simultaneously critiqued for its limited impact on the actual practice of leadership

(Kellerman, 2012). TVP represents a practical program which, until this thesis, has not been theorized nor scholastically evaluated. By empirically evaluating TVP I have attempted to harness the strengths of scholarship to make a meaningful contribution to our understanding of how we might enable practicing leaders to *be* and *do good*.

My empirical study employed a critical realist evaluation approach and a longitudinal comparative case study design informed by qualitative interviews with nine participating leaders and other-rater (e.g. peers, superiors, and subordinates). Four other-raters provided interviews at T1 and eight other-raters provided interviews at T3. The questions I sought to address through my empirical evaluation were:

> **RQ 4a** How can critical realist evaluation inform the study of leadership development?
>
> **RQ 4b** How do leaders experience TVP?
>
> **RQ 4c** What outcomes do leaders achieve as a result of TVP training?

By exploring these questions in Chapter 6, I proffer a number of contributions to leadership scholarship, the field of virtue ethics, and to practice. The overarching contribution made in Chapter 6 is that, so far as I know, it is the first empirical evaluation of TVP. TVP has existed for over 30 years, and during this time leadership scholarship has boomed, but to date, no one has theoretically or empirically evaluated TVP as a leadership development program. My findings, as reported in Chapter 6 are that developmentally ready leaders experienced TVP as a trigger event which sparked a new understanding of virtues, and a new ability to recognize virtues in one's own and others' behavior. This then informed more positive communication practices in terms of both sending and receiving messages.

As a contribution to leadership scholarship, Chapter 6 advances critical realist evaluation as an alternative to conducting evaluations based on cross-sectional survey measures or assessments of job satisfaction, which are critiqued for their failure to inform practice (Antonakis, 2017; Day et al., 2014; Kellerman, 2012). Instead of just answering,

'*Did the intervention work*?' critical realist evaluation enables scholars to identify; *what* about an intervention works *for whom* in *which contests* and *why* (Nielsen & Miraglia, 2017). To the field of leadership scholarship, Chapter 6 also puts TVP forward as a theoretically robust leadership development program that is ripe for further scholarly attention.

The primary contribution Chapter 6 makes to the field of virtue ethics is that it provides empirical evidence of how TVP results in leadership development and therefore further bolsters TVP as a program to translate the potentiality of virtues into practice. In challenging the critique that virtue ethics is inapplicable, Annas (2012) identified TVP as a way to implement virtue ethics in practice. But, she also warned that the program was "strikingly undertheorized" (Annas, 2012, p. 676). In this thesis, I have both theorized TVP and empirically assessed it, contributing to virtue ethics an evaluated program through which its rich philosophy might be more readily applied in leadership practice.

In sum, Chapter 6 provides initial empirical evidence of how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* practicing leaders. My efforts in conceptually analysing and empirically evaluating TVP have not been geared towards developing trade secrets nor creating guarded intellectual property; TVP is readily accessible via the web. My work has been aimed at contributing theoretical and empirical robustness to an already available program in the hope that doing so might encourage its uptake in practice. My primary contribution to practice has been to harness the strengths of scholarship to advance understanding of how we can best facilitate the development of *good* leaders in practice and extending TVP as a way of doing so, as I shall discuss further below.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE

My thesis has several implications for both scholarship and practice. Stated broadly, to scholarship it implies the importance of more focused attention on how virtues can inform the

development of *good* leadership in practice, and for practice it implies the benefits of adopting TVP as an evaluated program for leadership development.

Articulating Virtue as the Locus of 'Good' Leadership

Chapter 3 reconceptualized virtue by drawing on the deep ontology of critical realism and AVE. The reconceptualization undertaken in Chapter 3 emphasizes the need for future theory building within the field of POI to consider clearer definitions and conceptualizations of virtue, virtu*es*, virtu*ous*, and virtuo*usness*. Chapter 4 built on the deep ontology of virtue by aligning it with a deep ontology of leadership. By doing so, Chapter 4 illustrated virtue as the locus of *good* leadership. As the locus of *good* leadership, virtue informs the virtuous motivation of leaders, virtuous interactions and leadership events, and empirical accounts of leaders getting others to do things in ways characterized by virtues.

For scholarship, the implication of this work is a heightened focus on virtue as the primary locus of *good* leadership. This suggests a need to recalibrate theories and models commonly used to understand leadership, and it indicates a different approach to investigating leadership, in particular the development of *good* leadership. For example, which leadership approaches currently place leader character and virtue at the centre? And how do we ensure that leadership development scholarship honors the inherency of leader virtue, especially in consideration of the pressing demand for instrumental outcomes?

Articulating virtue as the locus of *good* leadership also has implications for practice. Leadership has a dual core of character and competence, or morality and effectiveness (Ciulla, 2014; Hannah & Avolio, 2011). It is not only virtue that leaders must concern themselves with, effectiveness does matter; however, Chapter 4 argues that leader competence and effectiveness are secondary to leader character and morality. Can a leader's ends really be considered *good* if they arise from means that are not? The primary implication for practicing leaders is the imperative to look inward before they look outward; to cultivate

their own character and attend to their own virtue before attempting to lead others (Manz, 2015). Focusing on virtue development as a means of leadership development has the potential to enable practicing leaders to become better leaders, leaders who *are* and *do* good.

Justifying a Virtues-based Approach to Leadership Development

Further to positing virtue as the locus of *good* leadership, Chapter 4 justifies a virtues-based approach to developing *good* leaders. It does this by illustrating the deep ontology of *good* leadership as an intertwining of virtue and leadership. Chapter 4 outlines the resonance between virtue and leadership along factors such as learnability, the composition of character, the potential of universal virtues in accounting for a plurality of moral foundations, and the linchpin feature of virtue which might well inform the conduit role leaders play between collections of individuals and the attainment of common goals.

Chapter 5 theorizes TVP by aligning each of its five strategies to virtue ethics, socio-psychological theories pertaining to organizational leadership, MFT, and moralized leadership and discussing how each strategy might inform *good* leadership practices. By justifying a virtues-based approach to leadership development, the work of my thesis encourages a shift within leadership development scholarship. It advocates a refocusing of scholarly attention on the development of *good* leaders in practice. And it implies the promise of further exploring TVP as means of doing so.

A key implication for practice is that TVP is readily available via the web. By justifying a virtues-based approach to leadership development and pointing to TVP as a means of doing so, I am suggesting that leadership development practitioners and practicing leaders seek out TVP resources and training to facilitate their own development.

Advancing TVP as a Theoretically and Empirically Evaluated Program for Leadership Development

Theoretically analysing and empirically evaluating TVP as a leadership development program has implications for the fields of leadership scholarship, POI, virtue ethics, and for practice. The primary implication for leadership scholarship is the advancing of a practical program which answers the critique of the field as currently over-focused on theory generation (Antonakis, 2017; Kellerman, 2012). By evaluating how TVP facilitates leadership development, my thesis highlights the need for leadership scholarship to focus on bridging the theory/practice divide in order more effectively and positively influence the practice of organizational leadership.

Advancing TVP as a theoretically and empirically evaluated program also has implications for the field of POI. TVP represents a holistic virtues-based development program that could inform POI's efforts in understanding and enabling optimal organizational and human functioning (Camero & Spreitzer, 2011; Cameron, Quinn, & Dutton, 2003). And for virtue ethics my work evaluating TVP provides a theorized program that has the potential to translate the rich potentiality of virtue into practice and mitigate the critique of the field as inapplicable (Annas, 2012).

Finally, by theoretically and empirically evaluating TVP, I pose substantial and promising implications to the field of leadership practice. The work of my thesis implies that TVP is theoretically robust and that, for developmentally ready leaders, TVP training serves as a trigger event which results in a greater understanding of virtues, an increased ability to recognize virtues in one's own and others' behavior, and more positive communication practices. TVP training is readily accessible; online resources can be accessed, and facilitators can be found around the globe. In sum, the work of my thesis provides initial

conceptual and empirical evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program, and implies its promise to *good* leaders.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

In regard to my conceptual analysis and development, there are limitations which must be raised, and which flag avenues for future research. In particular, while I provide a clear reconceptualization of virtue and a five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts (Chapter 3), I do not go so far as to discuss how virtue or discrete virtu*es* might be measured. This endeavour might prompt future work within the field of POI, which could consider the possibilities of measuring virtue, and virtu*ousness*, as distinct but also as more than the discrete virtu*es* such as gratitude or compassion which have until now been the focus of POI assessment. Additionally, investigations of positive practice and other enablers of flourishing, thriving, and positive organizing (e.g. Burke, Page, & Cooper, 2015; Cameron, Mora, Leutscher, & Calarco, 2011; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2015; Spreitzer, Porath, & Gibson, 2012) might be reviewed in light of the clarity I have provided to the notion of virtue and my five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts.

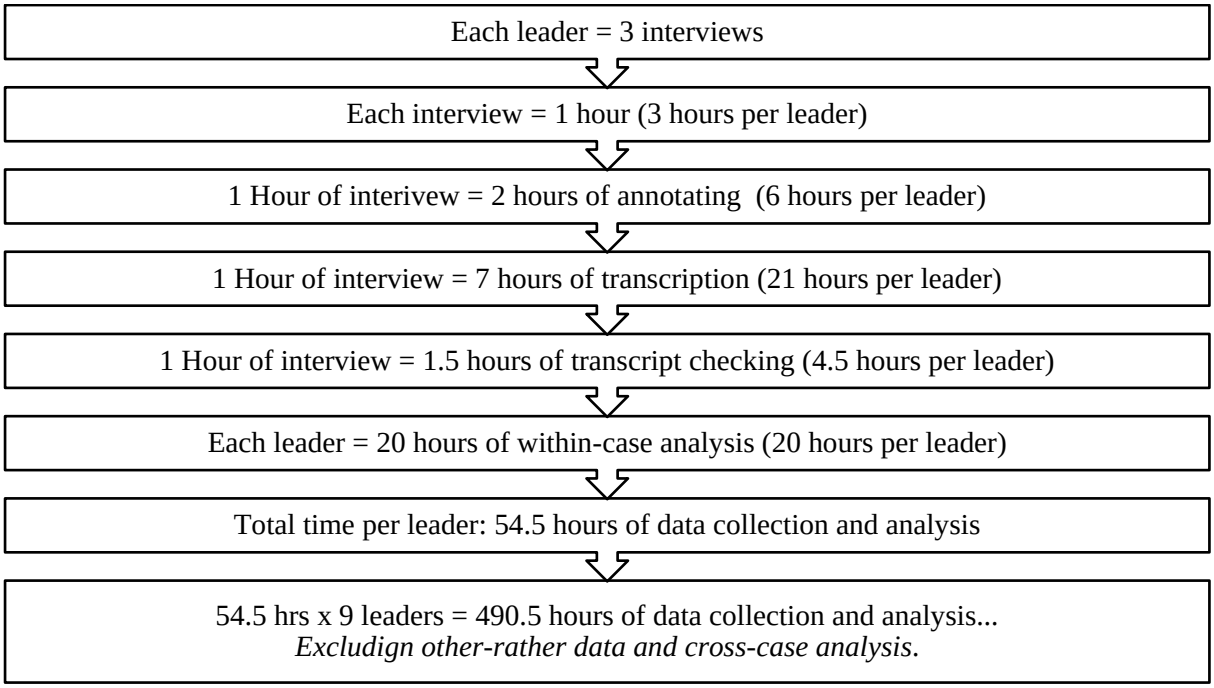
Relatedly, future work within virtue ethics may dig deeper into my deep ontology of virtue and probe or extend the five-factor framework for determining what is virtuous in which contexts. For example, historical cases could be reviewed to assess how or if the framework overlays events deemed as virtuous or not, such as instances of whistleblowing or downsizing. Future research may also more closely examine my conceptual arguments pertaining to the deep ontology of *good* leadership that posits virtue as the locus.

A primary limitation of my empirical work is the small sample size, as addressed in Chapter 6. Nine participating leaders and a respective nine cases is sufficient for a comparative case study (Kessler & Bach, 2014), but, I had a small sample of other-raters,

which contributed to an overreliance on leader self-reports, which are invariably influenced by social desirability. This was mitigated to a certain extent by the multiple, in-depth interviews I conducted with each participating leader and by the fact that each participating leader had at least one other-rater provide interview as a source of triangulation.

Additionally, employing a larger sample would have stretched the feasibility of conducting my data collection and analysis within the time and resource constraints of a PhD study, as illustrated in Figure 7. A total of 490.5 hours of collection and analysis time, before considering my exhaustive cross-case analysis in Phase 2, suggests that a larger sample would have necessitated additional time and resources.

Figure 7.1
Time Invested in Phase 1, Within-case Analysis



Despite these feasibility constraints, the fact remains that a greater pool of data from the peers, superiors, and subordinates of those individuals who experienced TVP training would have been preferred. This limitation clearly speaks to the need for larger-scale empirical evaluations of TVP as a leadership development program.

Larger studies could solicit data from a greater proportion of other-raters and include the use of mixed-methods. More specifically, future research might employ a pre-test/post-test mixed-methods assessment of constructs such as ethical climates (Cullen, Victor, & Bronson, 1993), ethical leadership (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Riggio, Zhu, Reina, & Maroosis, 2010; Zhu, Treviño, & Zheng, 2016), virtuous leadership (e.g Riggio et al., 2010; Wang & Hackett, 2015), or perceptions of organizational virtuousness (Cameron, Bright, & Caza, 2004). Employing these or other quantitative measure would lend further rigour to evaluations of if or how TVP might facilitate the development of *good* leadership. Larger future evaluations of TVP could also consider:

- A more comprehensive assessment of the theoretical propositions based on TVP strategies and articulated in Chapter 5. Curtailed by feasibility constraints and shaped by its exploratory nature, my study did not assess each proposition, but future research could certainly undertake a more comprehensive investigation of these propositions.
- If or how TVP might integrate with MFT and/or develop moralized leadership. MFT recognizes a plurality of moral foundations, which promise to be more accommodating across diverse cultures and contexts. This suggests that the universality of virtue and of some virtues coupled with the culturally sensitive strategies of TVP might serve as a means implementing MFT and developing moralized leadership.
- A closer focus on process evaluation. How might the processes and structure of TVP training better equip and support leaders? For example, the use of booster sessions or coaching to support the training workshop could be explored.

- How leaders who are not developmentally ready experience TVP and what outcomes result, and/or how TVP may increase developmental readiness. Within the scope of a larger study, quantitative measures of the constructs composing developmental readiness (such measures are recommended by Avolio & Hannah, 2008) could be used to provide more accurate assessments of developmental readiness and/or any increases attributed to TVP.

In sum, this thesis represents an initial, exploratory study of virtue and the virtues-based intervention, TVP, as a leadership development program. My conceptual analyses (Chapters 3, 4, and 5) reconceptualized virtue and focused on forging a new, virtues-based approach to leadership development. And my empirical study (Chapter 6) represented an initial exploratory evaluation of TVP as a leadership development program. It is my contention that within the aforementioned limitations of my research, I have provided a foundational conceptual and empirical understanding of how TVP may facilitate the development of *good* leaders and opened the door to promising avenues of future research aimed towards furthering our understanding how we scholars can best help practicing leaders to *be* and *do* good.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

To conclude, I return to the reasons I embarked on this thesis journey in the first place. We need good leaders, leaders who *are* good and who *do* good. This is imperative because in leaders morality is magnified (Ciulla, 2004, 2014). The actions of leaders have a magnified influence on the work and lives of the people they lead. As a leadership development practitioner, I have witnessed firsthand that developing good leaders starts with developing good people, people who are self-aware, accountable, inspired, and moral. And as a TVP facilitator, I had an inkling it had the potential to facilitate such development. Despite

abundant anecdotal evidence, I could find no theoretical or empirical evidence of TVP's efficacy as a leadership development program.

To inform my evaluation of TVP, I turned to the literatures of POI, leadership development, and virtue ethics. My initial readings raised questions I addressed through the conceptual analysis and development work of this thesis. This work impelled me to more closely consider the meaning of virtue, how virtue might inform *good* leadership, and how the practical program of TVP is aligned to extant theory. Building on this, and drawing on a critical realist evaluation framework, my empirical study represents the first known exploration of TVP as a leadership development program. My study shows that developmentally ready leaders experience TVP as a trigger event, which accelerates their positive development by providing a new understanding of virtues and an ability to recognize virtues in behavior. These understandings and abilities are supported by a list of 100 virtues and adaptable strategies that inform improved leadership communication processes.

From the start, I have been driven by my desire to help effect positive change for practicing leaders, those they lead, and the organizations and communities they live and work in. It is my sincere hope that by advancing understanding of how TVP can facilitate the development of *good* leaders, I have made a step towards doing so.

CHAPTER 7 REFERENCES

Annas, J. (2012). Being virtuous and doing the right thing. In R. Shafer-Landau (Ed.), *Ethical Theory: An Anthology*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc 2nd ed., Vol. 14.

Annas, J. (2015). Applying virtue to ethics (Society of Applied Philosophy Annual Lecture 2014). *Journal of Applied Psychology, 32*(1), 1-14.

Antonakis, J. (2017). On doing better science: From thrill of discovery to policy implications. *The Leadership Quarterly, 28*(1), 5-12.

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2008). Developmental readiness: Accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(4), 331-347.

Brown, M. E., Trevino, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*(2), 117-134.

Burke, R. J., Page, K. M., & Cooper, C. L. (Eds.). (2015). *Flourishing in Life, Work and Careers: Individual Wellbeing and Career Experiences*. Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Camero, K., & Spreitzer, G. (Eds.). (2011). *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Cameron, K., Mora, C., Leutscher, T., & Calarco, M. (2011). Effects of positive practices on organizational effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 47*(3), 266–308.

Cameron, K., Quinn, R., & Dutton, J. (2003). *Positive Organizational Scholarship: Foundations of a New Discipline* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Cameron, K. S., Bright, D., & Caza, A. (2004). Exploring the relationships between organizational virtuousness and performance. *The American Behavioral Scientist, 47*(6), 766-790.

Cameron, L. D., & Spreitzer, G. M. (2015). Positive Spirals: Practices that foster positive relationships. *Academy of Management Annual Meeting Proceedings*, 1-1. doi: 10.5465/AMBPP.2015.12478symposium

Ciulla, J. B. (Ed.). (2014). *Ethics, The Heart of Leadership* (3rd ed.). Santa Barbara, California: Praeger.

Ciulla, J. B. (2004). What is good leadership? *Working Papers - Centre for Public Leadership*, 116-122.

Cullen, J. B., Victor, B., & Bronson, J. W. (1993). The ethical climate questionnaire: An assessment of its development and validity. *Psychological Reports, 73*(2), 667-674.

Day, D., Fleenor, J., Atwater, L., Sturm, R., & McKee, R. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*, 63-82.

Dinh, J. E., Lord, R. G., Gardner, W. L., Meuser, J. D., Liden, R. C., & Hu, J. (2014). Leadership theory and research in the new millennium: Current theoretical trends and changing perspectives. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*(1), 36-62.

Hannah, S. T., & Avolio, B. J. (2011). The locus of leader character. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*, 979-983.

Kellerman, B. (2012). *The End of Leadership*. Broadway, New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Kessler, I., & Bach, S. (2014). Comparing cases. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Manz, C. C. (2015). Taking the self-leadership high road: Smooth surface potholes ahead? *Academy of Management Perspectives, 29*(1), 132-151. doi: 10.5465/amp.2013.0060

Nielsen, K., & Miraglia, M. (2017). What works for whom in which circumstances? On the need to move beyond the 'what works?' question in organizational intervention research. *Human Relations, 70*(1), 40–62.

Popov, L. K. (2015). The Virtues Project. Retrieved June 2015, from http://www.virtuesproject.com/

Popov, L. K., & Smith, K. (2005). *The Virtues Project Educator's Guide: Simple ways to Create a Culture of Character. Rev ed*. Toronto: Ontario College of Teachers.

Riggio, R. E., Zhu, W., Reina, C., & Maroosis, J. A. (2010). Virtue-based measurement of ethical leadership: The leadership virtues questionnaire. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 62*(4), 235-250. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022286

Solomon, R. C. (1993). *Ethics and Excellence:Cooperation and Integrity in Business*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spreitzer, G., Porath, C. L., & Gibson, C. B. (2012). Toward human sustainability. How to enable more thriving at work. *Organizational Dynamics, 41*, 155-162. doi: 10.1016/j.orgdyn.2012.01.009

Suddaby, R. (2010). Editor's comments: Construct clarity in theories of management and organization. *Academy of Management Review, 35*(3), 346-357.

Wang, G., & Hackett, R. D. (2015). Conceptualization and measurement of virtuous leadership: Doing well by doing good. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-25.

Zhu, W., Treviño, L. K., & Zheng, X. (2016). Ethical leaders and their followers: The transmission of moral identity and moral attentiveness. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 26*(1), 95-115. doi: 10.1017/beq.2016.11

APPENDIX

I

Interview Guides.

T1 LEADER INTERVIEWS

READ BEFORE EVERY INTERIVEW:

- Have you read and do you understand the Virtues @ Work Information Sheet?
- Have you signed the Virtues @ Work consent form?
- This interview will explore questions similar to the ones you answered in the survey you've already completed. I will ask you questions about your understanding of and attitude towards virtue, virtue development, and the role of virtue in leadership and business. I will also seek to understand your current approach to leadership and the context of your organization.
- If any of the questions I ask make you uncomfortable, you can skip the question, and/or terminate the interview at any time.
- All identifying data will remain confidential, including your name, organization, names of others within your organization, etc.
- This interview will be recorded so that it can be accurately transcribed. Recordings and transcriptions will be stored securely. You can review your interview and amend it if you wish.
- It is expected this interview will take between 40-60 minutes.
- Please answer these questions as honestly as you can – there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. I'm simply trying to understand where you're at now so we can get a clear picture of any impact the Virtues @ Work training may have on you and your leadership.
- Do you have any questions?
- Do you consent to proceeding with this interview?

Organizational structure

- Can you please describe for me the nature of your team or organization? What does your organization do? Approximately how many employees? Divisions/locations/etc...
- How would you describe your role?
- How many people are in your immediate work space?
- How many people do you oversee – directly / indirectly?
- ***Approximately how many people and from what areas/relationship to you have you sent your 'other-rater' survey?

Organizational context and environment (Organizational developmental readiness climate (Avolio & Hannah))

- In your workplace, how safe is it for people to be themselves, make mistakes, and be vulnerable?

- In general, would you say your workplace focuses on the strengths of individuals? If so, how?

Individual developmental efforts (individual developmental readiness (Avolio & Hannah 2008))

- When you start a challenging task, how much do you want to get the job done well –and how much do you think of it as an opportunity to learn?
- When you receive critical feedback, how do you react/respond/feel?
- In general, when you undertake a new course or development activity, how confident are you that you'll be able to acquire the skills taught?
- Other than [this role] what other roles do you fill? Personal/professional/social/family.
    - Do these other roles influence your leadership role? If so, how?
- What other leadership development activities have you undertaken? How would you describe the experience and any outcomes from them?

Attitude towards/knowledge of Virtues

- What prompted you to participate in this research?
- What do you think about the idea of it being 'virtues-based'?
- What does the term 'virtues' means to you? What are virtues? Can you give me some examples?
- How comfortable would you be talking about virtues with your work team?

TVP strategies

- When a member of your team excels at something or shows a high level of effort, what do you do?
- How do you let members of your team know what kinds of behavior you expect from them?
- The last time a member of your team behaved in an inappropriate way, what did you do?
- The last time you made a mistake or ran into an obstacle at work, how did you manage it?
- The last time a team member admitted a mistake to you, how did you manage it?
- How important is it to you to reflect, look for meaning, and acknowledge important events (at home or work)?
- When you notice a team member is upset, what do you do?

Last question

- What do you hope to get out of this study?

T1 OTHER-RATER INTERVIEWS

READ BEFORE EVERY INTERIVEW:

- Have you read and do you understand the Virtues @ Work Information Sheet?
- Have you signed the Virtues @ Work consent form?
- This interview will explore questions similar to the ones you answered in the survey you've already completed. I will ask you questions about your perceptions of your leader/peer/subordinate who is participating in the Virtues @ Work study, including his/her leadership practices and style. I will also ask some questions about your work context and environment.
- If any of the questions I ask make you uncomfortable, you can skip the question, and/or terminate the interview at any time.
- All identifying data will remain confidential, including your name, organization, names of others within your organization, etc.
- This interview will be recorded so that it can be accurately transcribed. Recordings and transcriptions will be stored securely. You can review your interview and amend it if you wish.
- It is expected this interview will take between 20-40 minutes.
- Please answer these questions as honestly as you can – there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. I'm simply trying to understand where you, your leader, and your team are at now so we can get a clear picture of any impact the Virtues @ Work training may have.
- Do you have any questions?
- Do you consent to proceeding with this interview?

Organizational structure

- Can you please describe for me the nature of your team or organization? What does your organization do? Approximately how many employees? Divisions/locations/etc...
- How would you describe your role and what is your professional relationship (reporting structure) to the V@W training participant?

Organizational context and environment (Organizational developmental readiness climate (Avolio & Hannah))

- Any question or comment about the survey or any of the questions you answered about_____?
- In your workplace, how safe is it for people to be themselves, make mistakes, and be vulnerable?
- In general, would you say your workplace focuses on the strengths of individuals? If so, how?

Attitude towards/knowledge of Virtues

- What prompted you to volunteer for an interview?
- What do you think about the idea of it being 'virtues-based'?
- What does the term 'virtues' means to you? What are virtues? Can you give me some examples?

TVP strategies

- When a you or a team member put a lot of effort into something, does your leader notice? If so, what does he/she do?
- How do you know what kids of behaviors are appropriate in your workplace?
- The last time a member of your team behaved in an inappropriate way, what did your leader do?
- When someone on the team is upset of having high emotions – what does your leader do?
- How does your leader reflect on and celebrate important events?

Last question

- What do you hope you and/or your leader/subordinate/peer gets out of the V@W study?

T2 LEADER INTERVIEWS

READ BEFORE EVERY INTERIVEW:

- This interview will explore your experience of the Virtues @ Work training and any intention you may have of implementing the training in your leadership role.
- If any of the questions I ask make you uncomfortable, you can skip the question, and/or terminate the interview at any time.
- All identifying data will remain confidential, including your name, organization, names of others within your organization, etc.
- This interview will be recorded so that it can be accurately transcribed. Recordings and transcriptions will be stored securely. You can review your interview and amend it if you wish.
- It is expected this interview will take between 40-60 minutes.
- Please answer these questions as honestly as you can – there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.
- Do you have any questions?
- Do you consent to proceeding with this interview?

Leader Interview questions may include:

- How did you find the TVP training?
- How has your understanding of virtues changed?
- What was the best part of the training?
- What was the worst part of the training?
- What parts apply to your role, and how?
- What is your intention to apply the training to your leadership role?
- Have you implemented any of the training?
- If so, what? And what outcomes have you noticed as a result?
- If no effort was made to implement the training, what stopped you?
- What (if any) parts of the training are you trying to transfer into your work?
- What will be the challenges to adopting (transferring) this training?
- Have you noticed any of your peers doing anything differently since the training?

Any questions or final comments?

T3 LEADER INTERVIEWS

READ BEFORE EVERY INTERIVEW:

- This interview will explore your experience of the Virtues @ Work study.
- If any of the questions I ask make you uncomfortable, you can skip the question, and/or terminate the interview at any time.
- All identifying data will remain confidential, including your name, organization, names of others within your organization, etc.
- This interview will be recorded so that it can be accurately transcribed. Recordings and transcriptions will be stored securely. You can review your interview and amend it if you wish.
- It is expected this interview will take between 40-60 minutes.
- Please answer these questions as honestly as you can – there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.
- Do you have any questions?
- Do you consent to proceeding with this interview?

Leader Interview questions may include:

- Have there been any significant changes in your work structure or role in the last 3-4 months?
- Can you tell me about if or how you have incorporated the virtues training into your leadership role?
- What has been the most valuable?
- How has your team responded?
- Are you calling virtues virtues, or some other name?
- Is there anything you've tried that has not worked or was not received well?
- What tools or resources would have been helpful in implementation?
- How would you explain what virtues are to someone?
- If no effort was made to implement the training, what stoped you?
- Have you noticed any of your people doing anything differently since the training?
- How is the Virtues @ Work training similar or different to other leadership training you've undertaken?
- What is your intention going forward – do you intend to keep up with using virtues strategies in your leadership role? If so, how?

Any questions or final comments?

T3 OTHER-RATER INTERVIEWS

READ BEFORE EVERY INTERIVEW:

- This interview will explore your perceptions and observations of your colleague and work environment since he or she participated in the Virtues @ Work study.
- If any of the questions I ask make you uncomfortable, you can skip the question, and/or terminate the interview at any time.
- All identifying data will remain confidential, including your name, organization, names of others within your organization, etc.
- This interview will be recorded so that it can be accurately transcribed. Recordings and transcriptions will be stored securely. You can review your interview and amend it if you wish.
- It is expected this interview will take between 15-20 minutes.
- Please answer these questions as honestly as you can – there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.
- Do you have any questions?
- Do you consent to proceeding with this interview?

Other-rater interview questions may include:

- how long have you worked with _____
- what is your working relationship with him/her (report to – peer – he/she reports to you)?
- what is it like working with him/her?
- Have you noticed any changes in your leader or work environment in the last few months? if so, how would you describe those changes?
- What do you know about the Virtues @ Work study?
- Looking back now, retrospectively – can you identify any changes your leader has made?
- changes in the way he/she speaks?
- how he/she listens?
- how he/she handles mistakes or challenges?
- What kind of impact has this had on you, your role, your leader, your relationship with your leader, your organisation?

Any questions or final comments?

APPENDIX

II

With-in Case Analysis –

Leader Reports.

INTRODUCTION

By conducting within-case analyses, I came to understand the unique personal, professional, and organizational context for each of my nine participating leaders. To conduct within-case analysis I analysed all data collected from all three leader interviews (T1, T2, and T3), my observations of the two days of *The Virtues Project* (TVP) training, and any relevant other-rater (peer, superior, or subordinate) interviews from T1 and T3. By redescribing each leader's experience of and outcomes resulting from TVP training, my within-case analysis reflected the abductive process of realist evaluation (Bhaskar, 2014).

Each individual leader case report was checked by the respective leader, and acknowledged as a true and fair representation of their experiences indicating the validity of my within-case analysis (Linda Birt, Suzanne Scott, Debbie Cavers, Christine Campbell, & Walter, 2016). For each of the nine leader reports, I first outline their role and organizational context, then relay my assessment of their developmental readiness according to the five constructs of developmental readiness articulated by Avolio and Hannah (2008). Following this, I summarize my observations of the leader during TVP training (Patton, 2015). And, finally, for each leader I include a summary of how they experienced TVP and what outcomes they achieved as a result.

LEADER 1

Leader 1 was senior leader within a government run service with over three decades of service. He had about 10 direct reports and around 500 indirect reports across many levels of descending hierarchy; there was one tier between Leader 1 and the top manager of his organization. Leader 1 was previously an acquaintance of mine and was recommended as a potential participant by a colleague who had participated in other training with Leader 1. Leader 1 quickly agreed to participate in my study, regardless of an immensely demanding role and schedule. In addition to capitalizing on a development opportunity, I had the sense he was doing so in part to support me in my PhD study, even though he never said as much in his own words.

Our interviews were long, each one taking over an hour. Leader 1 told many anecdotes and frequently made mention of people we knew in common. From the start, he could see how TVP training would and could integrate with other development work he had engaged in, such as Emotional Intelligence. He also made reference throughout out the study to how or if virtues training may work at different levels in his organization. Despite Leader 1's chattiness – he never divulged too much of himself. Even in the training he seemed engaged, but almost safely so. Not too vulnerable. For him it seemed an intellectual exercise – while for others it seemed a heart or spirit exercise.

Developmental Readiness

In our baseline interview, I asked Leader 1 a number of questions designed to assess his developmental readiness. I asked about his approach to learning and receiving critical feedback; I asked about how psychologically safe he perceived his workplace to be; and about other roles he filled in life. Leader 1's responses to these questions led me to believe he was quite developmentally ready. Supporting this supposition were comments made by one of Leader 1's other-raters at the final data collection. This other-rater had worked as both

Leader 1's superior and subordinate over the course of many years, and he said Leader 1 was,*"...willing to question how he does things and how he might do better,"* adding, *"...he has taken almost every [development] opportunity that comes his way, to make sure he's a good leader."*

These comments support my conclusion that Leader 1 was quite developmentally ready at the commencement of the Virtues @ Work study. He did seem to have some resentment and a certain level of frustration in his role, in particular towards higher-ups *"...a lot of the frustration is up."* These upwards frustrations may represent the two tiers above Leader 1; they may also represent the complex governmental framework within which his organization was run. Despite these frustrations, Leader 1 had a large number of employees operating under his lead, and he indicated that it would be primarily within his own team that he envisaged implementing virtues training.

My Observations of Leader 1 at the Training Days

Leader 1 was middle aged and worked in a male dominated organization. He was friendly and talkative, but also somewhat reserved and maintained a professional air. Watching Leader 1 through the TVP training days, I was impressed with how engaged he was. He spoke up and shared with the group; he asked questions and offered examples; and he even participated in the 'touchy-feely' stuff like the 'happy dance' and using the talking stick. While I was impressed with how open Leader 1 was, he did remain more detached than other participants. His experience of TVP training seemed a professional or intellectual one. This sense came through in our interviews as well, when he shared freely – but kept his sharing within the professional domain.

To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; 'what is one gem you are taking away and one commitment you will make?" Leader 1's 'gem' was that virtues had

helped him to integrate a lot of previous training across a lot of different stuff; his commitment was to continue to integrate and use virtues, or 'characteristics'.

Summary

The below bullet points summarise Leader 1's experience of TVP training as well as the results achieved in his leadership role and organization.

Leader 1's Experience

- Overall positive
- Integrated well with other training programs
- Provided a positive lens
- Provided a repeatable thing, trigger, hook, tag to build capacity of linking a range of behaviors to virtues (or characteristics)
- Would not use the word 'virtues' with the 'blokes' in his organization, prefers the word 'characteristics'

Leader 1's Outcomes

- More integrated implementation of previous training.
- More consciously focusing on recognizing positives and describing 'characteristics' (virtues) implicit in the behaviors and efforts of those around him.
- Awareness of the virtues or characteristics, keeping the virtues list as an artefact within sight and ready to reference, *"I've seen myself at meetings just glancing at it...is there a way that I could use this to describe something?"*
- Indicated intent to implemented more widely within the organization
- Showed mastery of virtues language, using the virtue *and* providing evidence (and recognizing when others did so)
- He was not convinced anyone in his team has noticed, nor picked up on, nor changed because of TVP training
- Using virtues language... *"I spoke to them about how their diligence and commitment to their tasks, how that it had benefited the organization, but also how it sort of benefited them as well. And surprisingly, I actually used those virtues."*
- Able to put more of himself into the work, and be more personal while still pushing the company line

LEADER 2

Leader 2 holds senior leadership roles and directors positions within a number of for profit and not for profit organizations. For the purposes of my study, Leader 2 collapsed her many roles into four primary positions, *"I've amalgamated a lot of different organizations into this [study] because I don't work with one defined team. I work with a number of different teams."*

Within her different organizations, Leader 2 played slightly different roles, from chairing boards to heading up marketing and PR. But a major strength she brought to every team she touched was her ability to engage people in a common purpose and spread the word about the organization or project, "*you need a good story and I can tell a good story."* Throughout our interviews, Leader 2 referred to herself as a "facilitator of harmony" among some teams she worked with, and to her "diplomatic streak". Both of these references speak to her ability to bridge sectors, demographics, and industries and achieve the results she does with her many endeavours. One of Leader 2's other-raters said, "*Leader 2 is a wonderful person to work with. She's so ethics-focused, and very positive about things and people...we wouldn't be anywhere near where we are now without having someone like Leader 2...constantly getting the word out in different networks."*

Developmental Readiness

Leader 2 explained her workplaces as very strengths focused, "*when somebody new comes into the organization, we find out what their assets and their skill bases are first, and allow them to shine."* Leader 2 also referenced the extensive work being spearheaded within her organizations regarding managing the mental health of employees. And while she expected her customer service staff to keep their personal issues 'off the floor' she also recounted stories of taking days off and providing comfort and company to employees too upset to work. These factors speak to the psychological safety of Leader 2's teams and organizations.

Knowing that Leader 2 had started all of the many enterprises she was part of, it felt a bit funny asking how she approached a new project or task. And, not surprisingly, she answered, "*I love learning. I am continuously learning. Even if it's just simple things like learning how to work with a new multinational that I've never worked with before, learning how to wend my way through GS1 codes...I adore stuff like that...I just get stuck into it and I think it's not rocket science...I just work it out and talk to a few people who've done it before to see if they have any tips or hints."* It was pretty clear that Leader 2 was an avid learner, and also that she had no doubt in her ability to learn what she set out to learn and achieve the outcomes she wanted. In my opinion, she presented a strong learning goal orientation and high developmental efficacy.

To gauge leader's self-awareness and clarity, I asked how they responded to critical feedback. To this question, Leader 2 responded by saying, *"...with maturity you learn how to take constructive criticism really well... with almost every gripe, there is a little grain of something that will actually make your operation better or that you can actually glean from it and learn from it. And I like that."* Leader 2 seemed well practiced at detaching from personal attacks or personal opinions, and generally grateful for the 'gems of truth' to be gleaned from grips and complaints.

When I asked Leader 2 about the roles she filled outside her professional roles, and if or how they influenced her leadership, she referenced her social network which she kept mostly separate from her professional networks, "*my friends are the people who appreciate me for just being me, not for what I can do for them."* I was surprised to hear that the extroverted, confident, eloquent Leader 2, *"spent the first 24 or 25 years of my life barely saying boo to a fly...I was observing life.*" She explained growing up in a family that swept *"difficult things under the carpet."* However, she explained that she was not that shy girl

anymore and she no longer avoided difficult things or conversations, *"I'm very diplomatic about how I talk about it, but I will not sweep it under the carpet."*

Leader 2's experience being a mother added to her complexity of leadership. When she began speaking about her teams and workplace cultures, she began to sound like a proud mother – referring to her staff as 'good' and 'friendly kids', who only needed a 'little bit of polishing' to turn into excellent staff and great professionals. Having employed dozens of youth over many years, Leader 2 explained, "*it's kind of like we've raised a whole bunch of kids."*

Leader 2's reference to a number of positions and functions she had "stepped out of" to make room for those around her who had grown into them spoke loudly to her confidence and well developed leadership as well as her readiness for further development. Confident, a keen learner, rich and varied life experiences, and a safety and security in herself and her leadership roles made Leader 2 one of the most developed and most ready for further development of all my leader participants.

My Observations of Leader 2 at the Training

On the morning of our second training day, Leader 2 was there early. She lingered near the door, and as each person arrived – she hugged them. She seemed to engage with the material and the group, but she made a few comments about the appropriateness of some of the virtues (such as 'prayerfulness') on the list of 100 given to participants. Leader 2 was engaged and present, she seemed at ease and happy to be along for the ride. But I sensed that where some other participants found the Facilitator "amazing" or "inspiring," Leader 2 was perhaps a little resistant to the Facilitator's somewhat evangelical nature. At the close of the two training days, Leader 2 said the 'gem' she was taking away was a new language to help her be a better leader and an understanding of how detachment could help her be a better listener.

In our final interview, Leader 2 told me, *"I've told tons of people about the virtues training."* Adding that she had explained the training content and forwarded resources and links to *The Virtues Project* website. When I asked how she was explaining the training to others, she said, *"...I talk about communication... and how I had really enjoyed being more concise with my communication and being able to name particular attributes or particular qualities in a person...as opposed to the more generalist 'atta boy'."*

Summary

The below bullet points summarise Leader 2's experience of TVP training as well as the results achieved in his leadership role and organization.

Leader 2's Experience:

- Leader 2 found the training to be riddled with 'religious undertones'
- She wished there had been more leadership examples or context
- She would have liked more time to practice the strategies during the training days
- The opportunity to spend two days reflecting on the training and her leadership roles and style was a highlight for Leader 2
- Leader 2saw potential in TVP training as a leadership tool, but felt it needed to be tailored to the business/leadership context
- She also flagged the potential of TVP or virtues training to better equip leaders to manage mental health in the workplace

Leader 2's Outcomes

- Leader 2 reported being more thoughtful and considered in the positive and constructive feedback she provided
- She also reported allowing people more space to talk through to their own solutions, as opposed to providing solutions for them
- Leader 2 had other-raters who, without knowing the content of her training, had picked up on these two shifts in her behavior – attesting to her successful transfer of training

LEADER 3

Leader 3 had been in leadership roles for the past 15 years, working within government and research organizations. At the commencement of Virtues @ Work, Leader 3 was about a year into his role as CEO and Board Member of an environmental regulation organization funded by government and the industries it regulates. Leader 3's organization was within the matrix of government, but was not affiliated with any particular party; his role and organization remained unchanged with the changing of governments. As head of a regulatory body, Leader 3 frequently dealt with conflict, antagonism, and conflicts of interest.

Leader 3 had an immediate team of about 12, including 3 managers. According to one of Leader 3's other-raters their team is small and stable, *"we don't get much turnover...lots of people have been here for over a decade".* Leader 3 has an additional 150 contractors who worked 'in the field'. The board that governed Leader 3's organization, and of which he was a member, contained 6 other members who he described as somewhat conservative and quite strategic. The members of both Leader 3's team and his board were all university educated professionals.

When I meet Leader 3, I was somewhat surprised that he had expressed interest in participating in my study. My surprise spoke to my own bias and preconceived ideas about how virtues might be received in the businesses context. I was surprised that a big, fit, middle-aged man at the head of a fairly corporate, 'tough' organization would self-select to be trained in virtues-strategies. But, Leader 3 was interested and committed, and he remained engaged throughout the duration of the study.

Developmental Readiness

My general impression of Leader 3 was that he was confident, capable, and genuinely wanted the best for his team. One of his other-raters supported this by explaining that *"when he first started, he said that...his goal was to enable us to reach our potential...if we saw something*

that we felt we could do better...or we wanted to get more involved...to just come to him." This statement seems to describe a consultative leader who is both oriented to development and developmentally ready.

Being in the position of regulating industry, Leader 3 described his organization and team as somewhat conflict oriented. It did not sound entirely safe to me, but Leader 3 seemed like he was confident or resilient or tough enough not to be phased, at least not emotionally or psychologically by it. However, he did admit that his team was pretty "exposed". He explained that his team's role was to interpret policy and that sometimes, *"they could – make the wrong interpretation -- give the wrong instructions."* But, he followed this by saying, *"it's probably pretty safe,"* referencing his own growing expertise in the role and the specialized support of his Board as fostering increased safety for himself and his team.

My impression was that while the nature of the work might be oriented towards conflict, the environment within Leader 3's team was probably relatively safe and becoming more so as he settled into his still-new role. This impression was supported by one of Leader 3's other-raters who said, that Leader 3 was consultative and that compared to his predecessor, *"you feel much more relaxed with Leader 3...he's very affable."*

My impression of the extent to which Leader 3 and his organization employed a strengths-focus was divided. Leader 3 said that yes, he was strengths focused, but he also mentioned the constraints of working within a government matrix, and admitted that some people in his team were in roles simply because of their length of tenure, not because of their abilities or strengths. This led me to believe that while Leader 3 may have considered the strengths of individuals, capitalizing on strengths was not an engrained approach within his broader organization or operating context; a detractor from leader developmental readiness.

When I asked Leader 3 if he approached a new task with a focus on learning or on achieving a good outcome, he recounted an example he said was indicative of his approach.

When he had inherited a new task he was not confident in, he found a book on how to complete the task; then he sought out the author of the book and enrolled in training directly with her. To me this represents a strong orientation towards learning. Leader 3 had the resources that would have allowed him to delegate or 'fudge' his way through the task, but instead he sought out learning to enable himself to better perform. Further supporting my assessment of Leader 3's strong orientation to learning was the statement he made about the MBA he had recently completed, *"At my stage in life, I guess it's not going to advance my career but I learned a lot and it validated a lot of the things I've done...in terms of my leadership."*

An other-rater told me that Leader 3 was always *"the first to admit...if he's not sure or needs help,*" adding that when Leader 3 had started as CEO, he had said to the team, *"I'm new to this job. If you see me making mistakes, just let me know. I'm not perfect..."* To me, this sounded like a leader who was humble, has a clear picture of who he was, and actively solicited feedback. When I asked Leader 3 how confident he was that he would be able to acquire new skills he was taught, he replied, "*pretty confident*," indicating strong developmental efficacy.

When I asked Leader 3 what other roles he filled and if or how they influenced his leadership, he explained that he coached a youth sports team and that coaching kids was the best way to learn how to manage people and get results. When I asked him what the main transferable lesson was, he explained, "*having goals that* they *set. Not that* I *set. And helping them to achieve what* they want *to achieve..."* Leader 3's coaching experience, and the way he used the experience to shape his approach to leadership, speaks to rich leader complexity. It also speaks to an orientation towards empowering not only his sports team, but his work team also.

Leader 3's responses to my questions about the strengths focus and psychological safety of his workplace left me unconvinced that organizational factors were supportive of his developmental readiness. However, his personal developmental efficacy, self-awareness, learning goal orientation, and leader complexity all spoke well to Leader 3's developmental readiness. I was particularly impressed with how passionate Leader 3 was about developing his team members, *"...we have to manage to get to those [organizational goals]. But for people who've got personal ambitions...I'm very conscious of helping them get to where they want to get to...I've said to my employees, 'Look, if a job comes up that you want to apply for, don't keep it a secret from me. I'm happy to help you not because I want to get rid of you, but...I want to help you advance your career. And if that position's going to help you, I'll help you get there.'"*

My Observations of Leader 3 at the Training Days

Leader 3 seemed incredulous about certain parts of the training. As a natural scientist he was sceptical of some of the more 'touchy-feely' stuff that was presented, such as muscle testing (outside the 'norm' of TVP workshops, but a specialty of the Facilitator). Leader 3 voiced his scepticism a couple times, but was respectful and good humoured in doing so. And his scepticism did not prevent him from engaging in the training – he spoke up, participated, even in the 'happy dance', got involved in the role play, and seemed to connect with the other participants. To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; what is one gem you are taking away and one commitment you will make. Leader 3's gem had to do with the order of life or general personal learning, and his commitment was to 'try and use them (virtues)'.

Summary

Leader 3 had made clear that the Companioning strategy was appealing and applicable to his role and workplace, and by our final interview he was using it frequently. He also reported a

shift in how he was thinking and acknowledging staff, looking at his list of virtues words and being mindful of offering supportive, positive recognition. The virtues, he said, were *"just sort of there in the background."* The below bullet points summarise Leader 3's experience of TVP training as well as the results achieved in his leadership role and organization.

Leader 3's Experience

- Leader 3 had some reservations and was somewhat sceptical about some of the content and delivery of the training
- He found the facilitation borderline Evangelical, and distinctly un-Australian
- He enjoyed the company of the training group and wished there had been more socializing and perhaps some sort of follow up for the training group
- Leader 3 seemed to regret that he was the only one in his organization who had received the training
- His overall experience seemed to be positive, he admitted hesitations but maintained that it had been a good process

Leader 3's Outcomes

- Leader 3 adopted the Companioning strategy and changed how he went about listening others
- He reported feeling more confident in dealing with the conflict that was part of his role and organizational function due to having this new listening strategy
- He reported that he was less likely to avoid uncomfortable or conflict situations, and more likely to deal with them in an empathetic way
- Following the training, Leader 3's emails and interviews with me were punctuated with virtues words
- He said he thought about virtues frequently and that doing so had helped him become more positive and to look for the good in people
- Leader 3 reported that virtues training had helped him develop his leadership qualities
- At the conclusion of the study, Leader 3 was inquiring about paying for his team to receive virtues training coupled with on-going virtues coaching

LEADER 4

Leader 4 managed an extremely diverse team of about 70-80 staff. She had been in management roles for many years and in her current role for the previous five. Within her current role she had implemented some drastic changes to both the structure and functioning of her team, including severely reducing the number of staff, systemizing tasks, and re-structuring work flows. These changes had resulted in a substantial cultural shift. Leader 4 recounted that she had not been very popular in the early stages of her current role, because of the changes she implemented. But, by the time my study commenced, Leader 4 was head of a cohesive, productive, and well-integrated team, which Leader 4 frequently referred to as a family. One of Leader 4's other-raters reported, *"Leader 4 is actually a shining beacon in this organization. Her team are extremely engaged. She's a really inspiring leader, she's got a lot of great ideas and her team absolutely adore her, would walk over hot coals for her."*

Leader 4 seemed to be well supported from above. Her organization was self-professed to be 'values-based' and her direct supervisor provided her with regular feedback, mentoring, and coaching. Leader 4 was held in high regard by her peers and higher-ups, one of whom reported; *"I have admiration for what she does every single day...she is proactive, and a strong manager."* Additionally, Leader 4's organization offered frequent upskilling and training. In fact, it was the human relations department of Leader 4's organization that passed the Expression of Interested document along to Leader 4 and supported her participation in my study.

Developmental readiness

In each of our three interviews, Leader 4 professed her love of learning. In our baseline interview alone, she made 24 references to her affection for learning; *"I love learning and if I learn just one thing in a day, I go home so happy."* Leader 4's love of learning and confidence in her ability to learn; her previous development efforts (undertaking a diploma,

Emotional Intelligence training, training in quality conversations, etc); the psychological safety she experiences within the broader organization ("*I always wanted to work in this organization because it's a really good people to work for, good company to work"*) as well as the safety she had fostered within her own team (An other-rater at the baseline commented that Leader 4 allows "*...space for that person to be that vulnerable person they are."*); and her varied and rich personal life experience all pointed to Leader 4's developmental readiness.

To help me further assess Leader 4's developmental readiness, I asked her how she received critical feedback, to which she answered, *"I don't just take it in my mind. I'll write it down and then I think about it and then I work on it. That's how I'm going to improve..."* This demonstrates self-awareness and clarity on Leader 4's behalf. However, at the baseline, one of Leader 4's other-raters reported she could improve her *"awareness of others and awareness of environment."* Admitting that he was being hyper critical (as in this was not a big issue, but rather if he had to pick an area for improvement this would be it), he went on to add that as someone who manages 80 hands-on staff she could *"work a little bit more on her observations of others and trying to pick on signals, on cues from others in regards to how they feel, when they feel it and how she can act on it, be it a strength or a weakness."*

This theme of awareness of self and others emerged again and again throughout Leader 4's participation in the study. However, overall I assessed Leader 4 as not only high in developmental readiness, but also as a well-developed leader.

My observations of Leader 4 at the training days

Leader 4 was one of the quieter participants during the training days. She was very composed and dignified, and she participated readily, but did not speak up too much. She expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to be there and seemed to enjoy the experience. To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; what is one gem you are taking away and one

commitment you will make. Leader 4 answered that her ‘gem’ was the personal and leadership learning; and her commitment was to commit to using virtues.

Summary

Leader 4 seemed to take to the virtues naturally. She used them in her interpersonal communication, her written communication, and as an internal point of reference to guide her own thoughts and behavior. In her own words, virtues training helped her become a ‘better person’.

Leader 4’s Experience

- Found the training a positive experience
- Explained that virtues helped her ‘feel’ more and put more emotion into her communication
- Thought using virtues would help her be a bigger, better person and leader

Leader 4’s Outcomes

- Calmer and more peaceful
- Was using virtues in email
- Picking a daily virtue
- Shift in language, using virtues or putting more feeling into her communication
- Noticed that she had “a more positive energy.”
- *“I think it made me a better person and I'm going to keep using it. I'm going to keep getting better and better.”*

LEADER 5

Leader 5 managed a team of about 7 professional staff within the same large hospitality business as Leader 4 and Leader 6. Of the three, Leader 5 seemed the least confident or 'at home' in her team. However, while she may have lacked confidence in her role and particular team, she was quite enthusiastic about the braoder organization, "*It's such a terrific organization. I wish I had come...years ago".* At the commencement of my study, Leader 5 had been in her role for just under a year. Similar to Leader 4 and Leader 6, Leader 5 had participated in a range of organization-led training initiatives including Emotional Intelligence and Quality Conversations. Their organization also had number of reward programs and cultural alignment initiatives.

Leader 5's case was a curious one, because while she seemed confidence and positive about the wider organization, in each of our three interviews, she made comments about some level of self-doubt or mis-fit between her and her team. At the baseline, Leader 5 reported that a recent engagement survey had suggested her team was well engaged, even though some members were "intensely private", adding that, "*when I first started in this team, it struck me how to contained people are."* As well as private and reserved, Leader 5 also characterized her team as "intensely busy". In a similar tone to discussing the busyness and reserved nature of her team, Leader 5 explained that she did have "*lots of moments of self-doubt*" and tended to "*spend a lot of time in my own head going, 'what if I do this? What if I do that?...which is not useful."* This self-doubt reverberated throughout each of our three interviews, and I suggest it both stemmed from and contributed to her somewhat fraught relationship with her team.

Leader 5 was open and shared freely and eloquently about her own personal life and personal development efforts; but these tendencies contributed to her slight discomfort within her reserved team. Early in our baseline interview, Leader 5 told me about her two severely

disabled sons. Her role as carer for her disabled children had also spilled over into writing, speaking, and advocacy work in the disability sector. Driven by her own challenges at home, as well as previous leadership development opportunities, Leader 5 had undertaken a range of self-work. She had participated in executive coaching, regularly practiced mindfulness, read secular ethics, studied emotional intelligence and the practice of choosing happiness, explaining that, *"the way I conduct myself in the world is important to me."* In particular, she explained that she was *"very interested in the concept of values and how they impact on [my] working life."* Leader 5 mentioned values and ethics on 11 different occasions during our baseline interview. This values orientation and personal drive for development foreshadows my assessment of Leader 5's developmental readiness.

Developmental readiness

Much like the other participating leaders, Leader 5's self-selection for Virtues @ Work indicated an openness to learning and a certain amount of confidence in her ability to learn. According to one of Leader 5's other-raters at the baseline, she was usually positive in discussing things that did not go quite right, *"she takes that as a learning curve."* When I asked Leader 5 how confident she was that she would be able to learn new skills, she replied, "pretty confident". In terms of self-awareness and clarity, Leader 5 reported an adaptive response to critical feedback. Explaining that, "*you have to be kind to yourself and give yourself time to process feedback...*" and also that, she was "*surprised by how quickly my mind turned to, 'Right, what am I going to do [to improve]?'"*

The two components of developmental readiness that stood out most in Leader 5's case were psychological safety and leader complexity. It was interesting trying to unpack Leader 5's perceived psychological safety because she seemed to sense it was fairly safe at the levels above her, but not entirely safe within her own team. Almost as if she felt safe and supported by her higher ups; "*if you make a decision, they will back you...I've never had that*

level of support before from an organization". But alienated by or doubtful of her role in her own team, explaining her fear that "*they won't think I'm competent*..." Within the bounds of this study, it was impossible for me to assess definitively whether the issue was a personal one for Leader 5, or if it was negative cultural aspects of her team. This issue posed a hurdle to her development and implementation.

The second component of developmental readiness that stood out in Leader 5's case was leader complexity. Leader 5 explained that she was a wife, mother, carer of children with disabilities, and writer and speaker on the topic of disability. When I asked if or how her other roles had influenced her leadership role, Leader 5 answered, *"...my caring role has given me a better leadership style because the kind of stress we were under and the sort of problems we had to navigate...[which gave us] an awful lot of resilience, and an awful lot of creative thinking strategies...as a family unit, when crisis strikes...we usually jump straight into proactive solutions mode...[and] that's the model I try for with my leadership..."*

My observations of Leader 5 at the training days

Leader 5 shared openly at the training days. She spoke about her team, but shared more about her children, their disabilities, and her experiences parenting them. Leader 5 seemed to enjoy the Facilitator's approach and delivery style, her body language was attentive and she participated enthusiastically in all the activities. To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; what is one gem you are taking away and one commitment you will make. Leader 5's 'gem' was to allow her team to have teachable moments. Her commitment was to implement the strategies and virtues into her leadership.

Summary

It is evident that the TVP training in particular, had a positive impact on Leader 5's personal and family life. How big an impact it had on her leadership and team is hard to assess. In our

final interview, Leader 5 reported a number of ‘wins’ within her work team, but they were mainly in relation to how Leader 5 herself was using and calling on virtues to adjust her own behavior and thinking, as opposed to using the strategies ‘on’ her team. The below bullet points summarise Leader 5’s experience of TVP training as well as the results achieved in his leadership role and organization.

Leader 5’s Experience

- Leader 5 expressed a ‘funny fit’ and/or some misalignment with her work team
- Leader 5 found the training ‘amazing’ and ‘really valuable’
- She found the content “useful in every sphere of communication”
- Noticed immediate easing of difficult conversations, when she adopted principles from the Companioning strategies
- Implemented a virtues-pick every day
- Was not clear nor convincing in terms of how or what she would implement in her workplace

Leader 5’s Outcomes

- Leader 5 maintained her daily virtues pick
- Virtues had become part of her personal reflective practices
- She had not implemented any formal virtues program or recognition in her workplace
- Leader 5 reported referencing virtues to help guide her own behavior and thinking in navigating her somewhat tense relationships with her team members
- Her family responded positively to virtues

LEADER 6

Leader 6 managed the food and beverage service in a large hospitality business. She had a team of 30-35 diverse individuals, with a mix of ages, backgrounds, cultures, education, and language. She herself had been in the hospitality business for many years and in her current role for the last seven. There were two levels of management above Leader 6, and a team of six supervisors helped her manage her restaurant staff.

Leader 6 sat in an office removed from the 'floor' of her restaurant, but often 'walked the floor' to have informal chats and 'take the pulse' of her team and operations. She explained her team as having "*a really fantastic work environment…we all work together to help each other."* An other-rater who provided an interview at the final data collection point, reiterated Leader 6's appraisal of her team, saying that not only was it a great team, but that Leader 6 wanted the best for her team, explaining that she *"looks after everyone...like they're family."* He also added, "*I'm not trying to suck up or anything...but...it's a pleasure working with her."*

Developmental Readiness

Leader 6 worked in the same organization as Leader 4 and Leader 5, and enjoyed the same access to training opportunities. When I asked Leader 6 about her perceived psychological safety at work, she answered that in interactions with those above her she felt "relatively' safe" and that she was confident to speak up *"90% of the time.*" Within her own team, Leader 6 strived to foster a sense of safety. She encouraged her team to speak up, and tried to instil in them the *"autonomy to try new things."*

Additionally, Leader 6 demonstrated a sensitivity to her team's psychological safety when she recounted how she adapted her style to suit them. Noticing that her staff were uncomfortable when called into her office, she chose to chat 'on the floor', or sometimes over a coffee to get a sense of *"stuff that's going on... and sort of bringing up...things that I*

might like to see improvement [on] or...things that I think that they're doing really well... they like that better." Leader 6 claimed that her team and department were akin to "*the crèche of the organization...we look after them really well."*

It seemed as if Leader 6 took a strengths-based approach with her team via task allocation, *"I ... give people tasks that I know that they enjoy and that they're good at... but I do also try to give feedback on areas for improvement."* Supporting her strengths-based approach and the psychological safety within her team, was the following comment Leader 6 made in our baseline interview; *"I very often will put on people who don't have much hospitality experience at all but they have a personality that fits...You can teach people to carry plates but you can't teach people to be* people *people."*

Leader 6 demonstrated a strong learning-goal orientation, explaining that when embarking on a challenging task, *"I ...see it as a learning opportunity...an opportunity to develop something that perhaps maybe I'm not so comfortable to do."* Adding that, *"I always try to put the best job that I possibly can and the work that I put forward, if it's right or wrong, I know that I've put my best in...so I'm not necessarily worried about the outcome because there's always room for improvement..."*

Leader 6 presented as conscious of self and self-reflective. In our interviews I never heard her shift blame or scapegoat, which implied a sense of self-awareness and accountability. When I asked how she typical responded to critical feedback, Leader 6 responded, *"...nobody actually* likes *to hear that but it's a very short-lived thing. I kind of go, 'Oh, that's no good. I didn't get that right,' but then I...seek more feedback, to see how I can improve."*

As with Leader 5 and Leader 4, Leader 6 was frequently offered training opportunities and she always took them up. This suggested her developmental efficacy, and her response to my question about how confident she was that she would be able to learn new

skills, confirmed it; she simply said, "I'm really confident." Leader 6 is a single mother and maintains a busy social life. When I asked if or how her other roles influenced her leadership she explained how often her staff often said, *"You're like the mother of our team."* She suggested that this was probably *"because I listen to people"* which made her team felt confident coming to talk to her about their issues.

Leader 6 had undertaken a suite of development activities, *"...over the last couple of years [our organization] has really decided to take...the leadership team...on a bit of a journey in this emotional intelligence space to try and improve...the culture within the organization."* Leader 6 cited this as priming her to express interest in my study. Leader 6's responses to my questions about developmental readiness suggest that she was very ready to develop; she was working in a safe team, possessed a learning orientation, was confident in her ability to learn, possessed a clear sense of self and an openness to critical feedback.

My observations of Leader 6 during the training days

It was clear to me that Leader 6 connected deeply with the training Facilitator. During break times, I observed Leader 6 and the Facilitator deep in conversation, and Leader 6's body language was deeply engaged during delivery. Leader 6 shared openly in the training group, but was not the most verbose of the participants. Her comment following the workshop, well-illustrated her resonance with the Facilitator, "*She was one of the most dynamic facilitators I have ever had in training. Her sincerity, honesty, and enthusiasm really set the virtuous tone."* To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; what is one gem you are taking away and one commitment you will make. Leader 6's 'gem' was gaining the ability to look at her own virtues and to grow as a person. Her commitment was to her team, to see and relay virtues in them.

Summary

The below bullet points summarise Leader 6's experience of TVP training as well as the results achieved in her leadership role and organization.

Leader 6's Experience

- Leader 6 presented as very developmentally ready at the commencement of the study
- Overall positive experience, both personally and professionally
- Deep connection with the Facilitator, and with the virtues content
- Found virtues complimented her efforts to make her work team a cohesive community

Leader 6's results

- Habituated implementation of virtues into personal life; daily and weekly virtues picks; virtues guided reflections
- Virtues complimented other self-care and self-work efforts
- Comprehensive implementation of virtues into leadership role and workplace; including virtue of the week and monthly virtues recognition program with team; virtues-based leadership mentoring with supervisory team; using Virtues Language in verbal and email communication
- Incorporating virtues into existing organizational reward programs and culture initiatives

LEADER 7

Leader 7 was a teacher before moving into management roles about 13 years ago. At the time of the study she was Sector Manager of a large training organization. She had been at the senior leadership level for about the last eight years. Leader 7 has about 15 direct reports, each with 10-25 staff reporting to them; with ultimate oversight of more than 200 employees.

Leader 7 struck me as sensitive and in tune to the needs and nature of her team; she was aware of many of the challenges they faced and seemed confident yet humble in her manner and approach. One of her other-raters told me that working for Leader 7 was much different to working for other leaders because of her "breadth of experience". According to this other-rater, Leader 7 fostered a positive work environment, and made her feel "fully supported in decision making and encouraged to be independent."

Developmental Readiness

While Leader 7 presented as caring and aware in her approach, the broader context of her organization did not seem very psychologically safe. When I asked Leader 7 how safe she thought it was for people in her organization to take risks, be vulnerable, or make mistakes, she answered, "*across the organization, people wouldn't feel that safe making mistakes.*" Over the preceding years there had been multiple restructures, "*and every time we've done that, we've lost a little bit more goodwill with people."* Leader 7 cited a recent culture survey which confirmed her assessment of low morale

Leader 7 explained that she thought her sector was slightly better off than others within the broader organization, citing the fact that her people would speak up and share both positive and negatives at organization wide meetings. However, she said that even in her senior role, she knew *"it's not a good idea to share too much, or have an opinion that is different."* But, she had the confidence to "*still do it.*" Speaking up or airing concerns seemed to be received as, *"being obstructive or not towing the line,"* and those who did speak up

were *"told very quickly, 'pull your head in.' or 'That decision has been made, so just do it.'"* It was pretty clear that while Leader 7's sector may have been a bit better off, her broader organization was low in psychological safety.

Further demonstrating that Leader 7 was operating within an organization not conducive to development was her response to my question, *"does the organization play to individual's strengths?"* She answered quite concisely, *"No. I'd say we try and make people fit into positions."* Adding, "*...we focus more on people doing the same rather than looking for strengths and talents and trying to direct people into those."* The eloquence and ease with which Leader 7 answered this question, to me, suggested that she was aware of how and why to play to strengths, but that it was not the norm within her organization. While organizational factors may have been stacked against Leader 7's developmental readiness, her individual factors indicated she was well ready to develop.

Leader 7 described her focus as getting results, but added that she reflected constantly on how and what she had learned. *"I'm always doing new things, things I've never done before. That's my job..."* When I asked Leader 7 how she would typically respond to critical feedback, she said, "*I'd absorb it and reflect on it and analyse it against what I'd done."* Explaining that she would look for where things had not been done as well as they could have been. She made an interesting point about how critical feedback often told her about the values of the other person, giving her clues about what was important to them or how they thought things should be done. With feedback, "*it's not just about the person getting it, the person providing it is also telling me something about themselves."* I sensed a slight resistance to taking full responsibility for every bit of criticism, but Leader 7 did have a healthy amount of self-awareness and a wiliness to analyse her own behavior in light of feedback. And she came across as very aware of others.

I asked Leader 7 how confident she was that she would succeed when she took on a new task or learning opportunity, and she replied, *"I don't think about not succeeding."* To me this demonstrated high developmental efficacy; it would not even occur to Leader 7 that she might not succeed at something. Leader 7 filled a number of roles outside her formal leadership position. She was a mother, grandmother, wife, career of her own parents, and friend. She was also involved in a number of community groups and committees. She had many layers of complexity and varied life experiences, and she could see how they influenced her leadership style, 'quite a bit'. For instance, "*family values and the way you've experienced things tend to impact on how you treat other people or see things."* All of which indicated leader complexity.

Leader 7 mentioned a couple formal development programs she had completed, including leadership development training, Emotional Intelligence training, and executive coaching. My understanding was the Leader 7 was working within a very complex, demanding, sometimes conflicting organization. And that while she had a focus on the wellbeing of her people, organizational constraints dictated her ability to lead in the way she might have in a more psychological safe, strengths-focused workplace. She admitted, *"...sometimes I think I really just like to be a teacher again... I like most of what I do now it's just you have your moments where it's incredibly stressful and you think, 'God, I just don't know if I need this level of stress in my life.'"* While Leader 7 presented as quite developmentally ready, organizational factors posed the potential to challenge her development and implementation.

My Observations of Leader 7 during the Training Days

Leader 7 was one of the quieter participants at the training days. She looked intent and engaged through most of the two days. I did not observe her sharing much about her own life or leadership role. And I did sense she was less interested in the personal tangents and stories

of our Facilitator, than she was in the actual content or opportunity to practice the strategies. To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; what is one gem you are taking away and one commitment you will make. Leader 7's gem was 'an understanding of virtues in leadership'. And her commitment was to integrate virtues into what she did.

Summary

Leader 7's role was extremely busy, varied, demanding, and often stressful. A primary highlight for her was the chance to have two days to reflect and grow as a person and a leader. She also enjoyed adopting virtues as a framework to guide her thinking and communication, citing the benefits of having a list of virtues visible to prompt her. While Leader 7 did not speak about having adopted the Companioning nor Teachable Moments strategies, looking back through the anecdotes she shared and those shared by her other-raters evidence emerged that she was listening more and allowing people to learn from their mistakes and challenges by guiding them back to virtues. The below bullet points summarise Leader 7's experience of TVP training as well as the results achieved in her leadership role and organization.

Leader 7's Experience

- Leader 7's primary highlight was having two days to meet people and reflect and learn
- From the training, Leader 7's main take away was now virtues language could help her;
    - articulate clearer expectations and boundaries
    - provide more accurate and descriptive recognition
    - identify and defuse her own personal 'triggers'
- Leader 7 stated that she would not use the word 'virtues' preferring the word, 'characteristics' or 'strengths'

Leader 7's Outcomes

- Leader 7 referred to a 'virtues framework' which helped her communicate more purposefully and which guided her thinking

- She had made a list of virtues visible on the wall of her office and referred to it frequently
- She had subtly integrated virtues words into her communication
- Her other-raters had noticed her listening more, and providing more autonomy and support
- Leader 7 indicated an interest in providing virtues training for her staff, and in virtues-coaching for herself.

LEADER 8

At the commencement of Virtues @ Work, Leader 8 was about a year into her middle management role within a government department. She was the direct manager to a team of four and had some "*managerial responsibilities over a couple of others.*" Leader 8 worked closely with her team, having daily communication and interaction with them as well as members of the broader department. Leader 8 described her role has having "*a large focus just on managing the staff and keeping the flow of information going."* And one of her other-raters explained that Leader 8 was much more focused on the managerial side of things than her predecessor had been, *"she's always very open in her communication and just really positive all the time."* Adding, *"it's refreshing to have somebody who actually wants to be a decent leader...who wants other people to self-lead...and she tries to develop people as well."*

Leader 8 had two children and lived on a large block of land, a 30 minute drive from the city. Leader 8 struck me as a deep thinker; frequently speaking of the value of holistic thinking, seeking different perspectives, refining of processes, gaining comprehensive understanding, and the importance of looking after her team.

Developmental Readiness

When I asked Leader 8 how safe her work environment was, she told me it was "*quite safe,"* at least "*compared to where I've been before."* She followed this by explaining that her team was 'tucked-away' and that many members had been there for over a decade. One of Leader 8's other-raters reiterated this, saying their team had a distinct 'togetherness'. Leader 8 expressed a little scepticism at the "*we all get on well together...we're a team*" rhetoric and cited some fault-finding and fierceness among some more senior leaders. However, her other-rater said that the leadership only considered it a mistake "*if you do it twice."* It seems Leader 8's work environment was relatively safe, but that there were undercurrents of a blame-

culture, within which Leader 8 described it as her responsibility to ensure the safety of her team members.

Leader 8 thought the organization played to individual strength to a certain extent, but she saw opportunities for improvement. She explained that a number of people *"have been doing the same thing for a long time. And have been placed in a bit of a box."* In her own team of four, she saw and was trying to capitalize on, "*opportunities to understand individuals a little bit better, and tailor jobs a little bit around them."* But she acknowledged that being one team within a larger division, within a government department there was only so much she could do. In sum, Leader 8's organizational context seemed moderately conducive to her developmental readiness, but, working within the 'mechanisms of government' could pose certain bureaucratic hurdles for Leader 8 to overcome.

Like my other leaders, Leader 8 demonstrated a strong orientation towards learning; *"I like to understand sort of the whole system and why things work and what the implications are for different levers and drivers on what you're trying to achieve."* However, between 'learning' and 'getting the outcome' Leader 8 thought *"it would have to be a reasonably equal split... you've got to demonstrate that you can do the job, and you can add value and you've got to just soak everything up...and talk to as many people as possible, and see as many different perspectives as you can and bring new ideas to the table."* This passaged demonstrated a healthy learning goal orientation; aware of the need to "*get some runs on the board*" but also aware of the benefits of seeking alternative perspectives, applying a holistic lens, and taking a learning approach.

When I asked how she responded to critical feedback, Leader 8 told me, ***"****I generally like it."* The anecdotes Leader 8 recounted illustrated her willingness to admit mistakes or oversights, *"to be honest, hadn't properly thought about what information she needed and I probably should have done..."* and her willingness to correct said mistakes or oversights.

Leader 8 seemed focused on making processes better; not blaming, but understanding and improving, and supporting her staff to do the same. And she appreciated the role of critical feedback in the process of continuous improvement, "*I really appreciate feedback and I would like more of it actually".*

When I asked Leader 8 how confident she was that she would be able to learn new skills she replied, "*reasonably confident*." She suggested that the real challenge with training or skills development was not so much the ability to learn the skills but to "*apply them appropriately*." This demonstrated high levels of developmental efficacy as well as an awareness of the difficulties of training transfer. Leader 8 explained the interrelatedness of her role as a parent and a leader, explaining the most transferable lesson was being clear about expectations. She said she was clear about what she expected from her children, and about what she expected from her team, explaining that she would put processes in place to make sure expectations were met and that her team was 'protected' from the fall out of missed deadlines or unorganized chaos. Leader 8 also spoke about the need to work with both children and employees "*where they are at"*, acknowledging that no two people are the same and that the same tactics will not necessarily work on two different people, be they children or employees. These two examples well illustrate how a Leader 8's life experience added depth and complexity to her leadership practices.

My assessment was that Leader 8's organizational context may somewhat limit the scope of her potential implementation and training transfer, but that individually, she was quite developmentally ready. She had a strong orientation towards learning and developmental efficacy; she was self-aware, accountable, and receptive to feedback; and she had rich life experience providing depth and complexity to her leadership.

My Observations of Leader 8 at the Training Days

I enjoyed watching Leader 8 during the training days. She had a thoughtful, unhurried way of speaking. She was good natured, laughed readily and seemed to have zero pretence about her. Leader 8's comments and sharing reflected both her personal role as mother and partner and her professional role and manager and leader. To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; what is one gem you are taking away and one commitment you will make. Leader 8's 'gem' was an appreciation for the honesty and a focus on strengths. Her commitment was to think and reflect on how she would use virtues.

Summary

Leader 8's overall experience seemed to be positive. She had some big wins at home with her children, and successfully 'tweaked' her existing leadership practices to include virtues and by so doing was able to provide more detailed feedback and clearer guidance. The below bullet points summarise Leader 8's experience of TVP training as well as the results achieved in her leadership role and organization.

Leader 8's Experience

- The training related to her workplace and her home life
- She thought the training was good
- She was impressed at the training group, who they were and how the followed along and stayed engaged with the training content
- She saw potential for virtues to support her team through a move in premises

Leader 8's Outcomes

- Leader 8 saw a "huge difference" at home, particularly with her children
- She implemented the Companioning strategy at home and work
- She used the Language of Virtues to provide positive recognition, and to guide and correct behavior both at home and at work
- She used virtues to provide clear expectations and boundaries
- Leader 8 committed to revisiting virtues with her team as a way to buffer and prepare them for their move to a new premises
- She saw potential for virtues training to be integrated more broadly with existing organizational processes such as values work, performance conversations, and conflict resolution

LEADER 9

Leader 9 has been in leadership positions for more than 10 years. At the commencement of the study, she was less than a year into a top manager role at a new professional services firm. Leader 9 had a bubbly personality and a reputation as a good leader. However, in our baseline interview she reported feeling less confident in herself and her leadership practices than she normally was. She attributed this, in part, to the newness of her role and organization. In her own words, she was "*feeling a bit lost and not sure what steps to take...like I'm second guessing my management style a bit, which I've never done."* Leader 9's wavering confidence and unease in her role foreshadowed a low assessment of developmental readiness, however, there was evidence that her lacking confidence and unsureness was only a temporary thing, due primarily to circumstantial challenges that would soon be remedied.

Developmental Readiness

My impression was that Leader 9's developmental readiness was low relative to other leader participants. However, there was still the fact that she had self-selected for the development opportunity provided by the study, so she was by no means totally lacking in readiness, and was probably more ready than the vast majority of leaders.

When I asked Leader 9 about her approach to learning versus achieving good outcomes, she responded; *"I'm the person that likes to do something really well. So that generally overrides me,"* indicating a lean towards outcome over learning. Additionally, she expressed reservations about 'soft-skills' training, stating, *"I'm usually negative before I go into a training course...I just don't get that much out of it."* She attributed this in part to the reserved nature of her industry and organization, *"...we're quite restricted...very conservative"*. To me, this indicated low developmental efficacy, as she was expressing uncertainty in her ability to transfer 'soft-skills' into her workplace before she had even

experienced the training. However, she did seem more confident in her ability to transfer 'hard skills'.

When I asked how she responded when she received critical feedback, Leader 9 responded, "I love critical feedback!" This spoke to a clear self-concept and self-awareness, essential components of developmental readiness. I assessed Leader 9's leader complexity by asking her leader what other roles she filled and if or how these other roles contributed to her leadership role. Leader 9 is a daughter, sister, wife, and mother. Of particular interest was explanation of how her leadership role spills-over into her mother role, rather than the other way around – which is more what I would have expected. *"I guess my management style was created before I had my children. So I find that the way I talk to and discipline my children at home, is very similar to what I do at work."* Despite the unexpected direction of this spill-over, Leader 9 clearly has a complexity to her and her leadership, drawing on one domain or role to inform the other.

Finally, I assessed perceived psychological safety by asking Leader 9 how safe was to be vulnerable and make mistakes in her workplace. This question brought Leader 9 back to issues of uncertainty and lacking confidence. "*I think everyone's probably a little bit nervous to be themselves."* She attributed this to the newness of the business. *"...it's a little bit scary to actually make a call and go, 'alright, let's do this'".* However, Leader 9 comments were countered by her other-rater who stated that *"she's generous and very – a happy person, and she tends to handle stress quite well.*"

To me, these data suggested that Leader 9, at the baseline, was feeling uncharacteristically uncertain and unconfident, and that she perceived low levels of psychological safety in her role and workplace. However, my previous knowledge of her, her own reference to the fact that she had never questioned herself as much as she was, and the comments of her other-rater, led me to believe that it was a distinct phase or period of time

that were undermining Leader 9's confidence not a general or chronic lacking of confidence. But, from the data I concluded that Leader 9 was not very developmentally ready. She was more concerned with doing a good job than learning; she had reservations about 'soft-skills' training; and reported low levels of perceived psychological safety in her workplace.

Observations of Leader 9 at the training

Leader 9 seemed very intent and focused through most of the training. I observed her watching the Facilitator closely, making notes, and exhibiting body language which suggested she was engaged with the content and group. However, I also noticed the occasional slight recoil and some good-natured laughter at some of the activities, including the 'happy dance' and some of the props, such as 'virtue gems' and the 'talking stick'. While I picked up on her metaphorical raised-eyebrow, none of this caused Leader 9 to walk-out or withdraw. And, as is often the case, the very experience of doing something a bit silly had the effect of bringing the group together and creating a sense of cohesion in shared experience. To close the training, the Facilitator asked each participant; what is one gem you are taking away and one commitment you will make. Leader 9's 'gem' was a new framework to support her staff and her family, her commitment was to 'just do it'.

Summary

The below bullet points summarize Leader 9's experience of and outcomes resulting from her participation in the study.

Leader 9's Experience

- Overall positive
- Slight discomfort with some training activities, and slight hesitation at the start of training, but this quickly transformed into an appreciation for the approach and content
- Major change to understanding of virtues
- Training was relevant to work and home life
- Was uneasy about the word 'virtues'

- Was resistant to some of the virtues on the list of 100, specifically those relating to spirit or spirituality (e.g. prayerfulness, purity, reverence, faith)
- Would have appreciated more support with planning for and resourcing implementation

Leader 9's Outcomes

- Incorporated virtues into culture consulting work with other organizations
- Used virtues strategies at home, and saw a difference in how her children responded to her when she did so
- Started providing more explanation and specificity to feedback, sometimes using virtues
- Adapted which virtues she used and how to '*make it more suitable'* to her

SECTION REFERENCES

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2008). Developmental readiness: Accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 60*(4), 331-347.

Bhaskar, R. (2014). Foreword. In P. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney & S. Vincent (Eds.), *Studying Organizations using Critical Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Linda Birt, Suzanne Scott, Debbie Cavers, Christine Campbell, & Walter, F. (2016). Member Checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research, 26*(13), 1802 - 1811.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

APPENDIX

III

Coding process examples.

CODING PROCESS EXAMPLES

The following tables are representative examples of my coding processes. Table 1 illustrates the parent and child nodes I developed in my cross-case analysis to analyse the developmental readiness of leaders at T1. Table 2 illustrates the parent and child nodes I developed in my cross-case analysis to analyse improved leader communication processes at T3.

Developmental readiness is a composite construct composed of developmental efficacy, self-concept clarity, learning goal orientation, and leader complexity. Accordingly, I created a parent node for Developmental Readiness, and descending child nodes to capture the data pertaining to the sub-elements of developmental readiness as illustrated in Table I.

Table 1 – Coding process example 1

Parent node	Child node	Coding rule	Sample transcribed statement
Developmental readiness	Developmental efficacy	Answers to the question, "When you undertake a new course or development activity, how confident are you that you'll be able to acquire the skills taught?"	*"I don't think about not succeeding. Yeah, confident*." – L7 *"...if you teach me something new, I'll pick it up."* – L1 *"I'm really confident."*- L6
	Self-concept clarity	Answers to the question, "What is it like when you receive critical feedback?"	"*I seek more feedback to see how I can improve."* – L6 *"...with almost every gripe, there is a little grain of something that will actually make your operation better; something you can actually glean and learn from."* – L2 *"I love critical feedback."* – L9 "*I generally like critical feedback and would like more of it."* – L8
	Learning goal orientation	Answers to the question, "When you start a challenging task, how much do you want to get the job done well –and how much do you think of it as an opportunity to learn?"	"*I'm going to do a good job. But I also reflect and focus on learnings..."* – 7 *"I think probably the learning process was most interesting to me around it"* – L5 "*I take anything new as a challenge."* – L4 "*Do the learning – get the outcome*" – L3
	Leader complexity	Answers to the question, "Other than your job, what other roles do you fill personal/ professional/social/family)? Do these other roles influence your leadership role? If so, how?"	*"I coach a kids' sports team...there couldn't be a better thing to do to teach you how to manage people and get results."* – L3 *"...my caring role (of children with disabilities) has given me a better leadership style [it's] given me an awful lot of resilience, and creative thinking strategies...so my mind has learned to jump to solutions much more quickly..."* – L5

Table 2 shows the parent and child nodes I developed in my cross-case analysis to analyse leaders' reports of improved communication processes following *The Virtues Project* training at T3.

Table 2 – Coding process example 2

Parent node	Child node	Coding rule	Sample transcribed statement
Better communication	Receiving – better listening	Data pertaining to leaders' reports of improved listening skills	*"I'm more open to listening and considering…and less likely to jump in and taking over the conversation*" – L2 *"I've certainly taken on board that whole position of letting someone keep talking rather than butting in."* – L3
	Sending – speaking to others	Data pertaining to leaders' reports of changed message sending following the training	*"...I am able to name particular attributes or particular qualities in a person...as opposed to the more generalist 'atta boy'"* – L2
	Providing feedback	Data pertaining to leaders' reports of providing different or better feedback following the training	*"...it's definitely changed the way I would recognize what people have done and explain expectations to people"* – L8

APPENDIX

IV

The Virtues Project list of 100 Virtues.

Accessed from www.thevirtuesproject.com, July 2018.

VIRTUES: THE GIFTS OF CHARACTER

Acceptance
Accountability
Appreciation
Assertiveness
Awe
Beauty
Caring
Certitude
Charity
Cheerfulness
Cleanliness
Commitment
Compassion
Confidence
Consideration
Contentment
Cooperation
Courage
Courtesy
Creativity
Decisiveness
Detachment
Determination
Devotion
Dignity
Diligence
Discernment
Empathy
Endurance
Enthusiasm
Excellence
Fairness
Faith
Faithfulness
Fidelity
Flexibility
Forbearance
Forgiveness
Fortitude
Friendliness
Generosity
Gentleness
Grace
Gratitude
Helpfulness
Honesty
Honor
Hope
Humanity
Humility
Idealism
Independence
Initiative
Integrity
Joyfulness
Justice
Kindness
Love
Loyalty
Mercy
Mindfulness
Moderation
Modesty
Nobility
Openness
Optimism
Orderliness
Patience
Peacefulness
Perceptiveness
Perseverance
Prayerfulness
Purity
Purposefulness
Reliability
Resilience
Respect
Responsibility
Reverence
Righteousness
Sacrifice
Self-discipline
Serenity
Service
Simplicity
Sincerity
Steadfastness
Strength
Tact
Thankfulness
Thoughtfulness
Tolerance
Trust
Trustworthiness
Truthfulness
Understanding
Unity
Wisdom
Wonder
Zeal